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MIDDLESEX

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PREFACE

MIDDLESEX, squeezed up as it is among more expansive beauties, and too much overshadowed by the chimneys of Greater London, may not be thought of as a show county. But no shire need hang its head that contains such scenery, still hardly spoiled, as can be found about Hampstead Heath, Enfield Chase, Harrow Weald, and the leafy heights of Pinner, with many islets of pleasant greenery not yet drowned in the brick-and-mortar deluge. Its very misfortune of being so near a rich city contributes one feature of ornament in notably frequent parks, pleasure grounds, and gardens. Then its hills, vales, and woods can boast a special interest in having perhaps inspired more of our great poets than has any larger English county. The writer has explored it in every corner, marking out charms often neglected by those who hurry over its dusty or muddy high roads to reach neighbouring bounds that have not always a better right to give themselves airs of rurality.

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Sketch-map of the county at end of volume.

MIDDLESEX

I

LONDON'S COUNTY

FRESH from having sounded Surrey's praise, I find myself called on to put a new barrel into my organ for the tune of Middlesex. At once comes to mind a scene in a petty sessions court, where it was a certain lawyer's business to tear to rags the character of a witness on the opposite side, as he did with professional gusto. But when the next case came on, it was the turn of this damaged witness to stand in the dock; then the lawyer himself led the laugh raised by his announcement: "I appear for the prisoner, your worships!" Clients must reckon with such awkward chances where a small knot of country solicitors divide the alternation of blowing hot and cold on the course of justice.

At the time I thought this particular client unfairly used; but it occurs to me that I am now in much the same plight as was his turncoat champion. In that volume on Surrey I had not foreseen how I was to

hold a brief for Middlesex, with which I then made some odious comparisons, and called Cobbett to witness, in his downright way, against the latter county as "all ugly." Now, we hack-writers, a poor but more or less honest tribe, do not pump up sweet or bitter so easily as those fountains of legal eloquence that at the Old Bailey or elsewhere stand ready to spout high moral indignation, touching emotion, and jury-bamboozling argumentation for whichever party may be first to put a fee in their slot. The literary conscience being less elastic, I have nothing for it but to acknowledge that, in the heat of advocacy for Surrey, I was led into speaking with too little respect of its neighbour across the Thames. As for my witness, counsel on the other side might easily show that he had an itch for venting random abuse, that on occasion he vilipended the fairest parts of his beloved Surrey, and that he lived in the flattest and tamest corner of the slandered county. As for myself, casting off the metaphor of wig and gown, I humbly and heartily cry *peccavi*, I recant my error, and in the following sheets will stand to do ample penance for having said any word that might bring a blush of resentment to the cheek of Middlesex. What I may have hinted to its disparagement was spoken in haste, without malice, and I trust fully to explain it away after the example of that courtly German tutor who, on his princeling pupil translating *albus* as "black," remarked, "Quite so, your Transparency—black, but not indeed absolutely black; rather verging on grey—one might say

light grey, or even white, if his Serene Highness will graciously allow."

In sober earnestness, as English counties go, there is little need of apology for Middlesex, which, if not ranking as a show county, and certainly not so charming, on the whole, as Surrey, has some bits hard to match. It may be truly said of this green-robed damsel that "when she is good she is very, very good," and that when not so good, she is seldom "horrid." The worst of it is flats fit for market-gardens and football fields, of which the largest stretch extends on the west side of London. Yet here, too, one is seldom out of sight of some pleasant rise, some oasis of park wood, some straggling line of hedgerow timber ; and even that most dreary edge of the county, the marshlands of the Lea, is overlooked by the heights of Clapton and Enfield. The general character is a gently undulating surface, swelling more boldly in the heights north of London, and in the ridge above Stanmore, where, at its junction with Hertfordshire, Middlesex reaches a highest point of about 500 feet. The most marked features are those two lines of high ground, the latter walling in the north side and curving round on the north-west, then between them the basin of the Brent, in which stand up isolated hills like that of Harrow.

So far as size goes, Middlesex has little to boast of, being the smallest but one of English counties, not half so big as Surrey. A winter day's stroll would bring us through its greatest length, and at one point it

might be stepped across in a couple of hours. On the other hand, its smaller area has a considerably larger population than Surrey's, even excluding its bigger half of the Metropolitan area. But more thickly packed as it is with suburbs and villages, farms and factories, Middlesex is not so well off as Surrey for good old independent towns, and for capital has to content itself with the shabby squalor of Brentford. London seems to have cast its shadow on this side so as to stunt the growth of puny boroughs. Another contrast between the two counties is in shape, Surrey being, on the whole, more compactly contained than its sprawling neighbour. But the most striking difference is that of soil, Surrey marked off in zones of clay, chalk, and sand, that give its special ornament of dimpled variety, while Middlesex shows mainly a smug face of London clay, only here and there spotted by sandy pimples, gravelly scabs, rare warts of rock, or more frequent freckles of brick earth, in most parts interlarded with the patches and cosmetics applied by elaborate culture.

This much-enamelled nymph wears, perhaps, a too monotonous dress of green, hay and market vegetables being now the chief crops of Middlesex, though time was when its "Pure Vale" had a name for the best wheat in England to make flour for the royal larder. Yet the supply of London Haymarkets and Covent Gardens has not blighted its most common beauty of "hedgerow elms on hillocks green." It can be pronounced, indeed, a very well-wooded county, studded with parks and gardens, and richly laced with avenues,

looking like fragments of that great Middlesex forest which once covered all its heights, when the valleys were marshy wildernesses, and the most eligible residential quarters such island camps and clearings as have left their traces on Ludgate Hill and Brockley Hill at either end. For a good time back the advantages of ornamental planting have been liberally bestowed on a shire where Defoe could reckon not less than three thousand houses "which in other Places would pass for Palaces, and most if not all the Possessors whereof keep Coaches," not to speak of myriads of gigmanity.

One glory may be claimed without question by London's chief county—which, of course, is to be distinguished from the County of London—that English literature must be full of scenes and images drawn from fields that lay within a walk of Grub Street. Till the last generation or two we find our poets more at home on the north side of the Thames, not a few of them, indeed, born within the sound of Bow Bells. Milton, Pope, Addison, Johnson, Goldsmith, Gray, Keats, Byron, Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, Lamb—such are the shades that at once come to mind as haunting this countryside. Even within the present bounds of London they found their whispering groves, verdant lawns, and blossoming brakes, long buried beneath bricks and mortar, where such names as Maiden Lane, Islington Green, Highbury Barn, or Willow Walk are like the tombstones of beauty that lives to be a joy for ever in immortal verse.

Middlesex

Population and industry have wrinkled and scarred the natural features of a county *nimium vicina Cremonæ*. London itself has spread leagues to the north since the day when one of Miss Burney's cits used "to take a walk in Tottenham Court Road as far as the Tabernacle or thereabouts, and snuff in a little fresh country air." Nearly a century earlier "Evelyn's Diary" sighed over two new streets behind Piccadilly—"to such a mad intemperance was the age come of building about a city by far too disproportionate already to the nation." Half a century later Mary Lamb could speak of Dalston as "quite countrified," where her brother, in his half-serious way, boasted of walks to such "romantic" scenes as Hackney and Tottenham. When, beyond the northern heights, a wayfarer of our generation thinks to have left the smoky Babylon behind him, he finds it breaking out again in whole towns of suburban homes, through which its trams run to the very edge of the county; for in these days of steam and electricity London grows and multiplies not only by accretion, but fissiparously, throwing out swarms to settle upon blooming trees and flowery meads, whence, indeed, it is the drones that daily flit back to make honey in the original hive, so that we had better drop this metaphor as a stinging one.

Has any Lubbock or Maeterlinck ever had an opportunity of watching a new crop of London homes as it rises on the ground? Here is a goodly field that once fattened corn or turnips, but for long has been laid out in grass, making part of a dairy farm, a horse

paddock, a golf course, or area for one of those open conical towers often standing up in the environs of out Babylon, which might be taken for Chaldean observatories or wickerwork idols, to be filled with hecatombs of captive victims, but the initiated recognise them as shooting-stands for the practice of Cockney sportsmen. Perhaps the ground is let to a cricket or football club, and that is more like to be a sign of the doom close at hand. These youthful athletes hold their playgrounds on more precarious tenure than the richer amateurs of golf; then a season comes when the gates are left open, the fences fall in gaps, the weather-stained notices to trespassers stand in idle decay, and the local urchinry press in to sport at will, no longer snatching a fearful joy. For weeks, months, the field lies waste, uncared for, sodden and sorry, trampled to flaws of bareness, with patches of rank weeds and unsavoury rubbish-heaps—a no-man's-land, as might seem, that in truth is signed, sealed, and delivered to the speculative builder. Yet here still peep out daisies and buttercups, "the little children's dower"; and here hawthorn and hemlock bloom bravely on the ragged hedge or choked ditch, along which wander youth and maid, for whom nature's poorest charms are made glorious by the sunshine of life's May-days, and their feet tread here as lightly as on the heath of Hampstead or the rich lawns of Hampton, while still they can whisper that old story, "Old and yet ever new, and simple and beautiful always."

But too soon wooers and playfellows are exorcised

by short pipes and horny hands digging trenches, laying foundations, piling bricks and mixing mortar. Already the open field may be marked out in invisible streets, labelled with titles for which the builders have much ado to draw on their invention, one erecting a chain of castles in the air, another completing a series of abbeys, a third affecting historic surnames, while a fourth may invoke famous writers or heroes of the hour, and it saves trouble when some local landmark can be pressed into service as godfather. Soon, over broken waves of grass, emerge the brick reefs wrought by trades-union zoophytes. The rows of houses rise like an exhalation, story on story. Lath and plaster, jousts and beams, stucco, slates take their place as if by *hey presto !* and where you walked on a spring evening along some puddled footpath, or some trickling rill, in the height of summer you must pick your steps on incomplete pavements of Brook Terrace or Oak Avenue, again coming upon that young couple who, earlier in the season, were all eyes for one another, but now are fain to bend their united looks upon the high-pitched proclamations of house-agents and the fluttering hopes of " orders to view."

Almost as soon as run up the houses may be taken. Builders' carts are succeeded by furniture-vans ; bare window after window blossoms out with blinds, flower-pots, faces watching new neighbours coming in turn to their ordeal of broken crockery, broken promises of tradesmen, struggles with furniture that must be forced to fit, clashing of tempers and tastes that ought to har-

monize, ends that should be made to meet. And as these young households settle down, so does the colony clear up its litter. Now the dovetailed dwellings may be numbered, that at first, perhaps, stood precariously independent as "Honeymoon Cottage" or what not, six-roomed "Chatsworths," two-storied "Abbotsfords," veritable "De Vere Mansions," housing a dozen Smiths and Browns. Gaps are filled, rough edges are rounded off, roadways are beaten smooth; one by one are barred the footpath short cuts, on which smart or smug husbands and brothers, with some salt of youthful sport in them, made hasty morning spurts to the nearest station. Their evening return is guided by lines of gaslights to the welcoming door, at which will be handed in so many circulars, and among them, too soon, demand-notes for rates and taxes.

In the intervening hours, the rawly-paved streets are somewhat silent, but for cheery whistling of butchers' and bakers' boys, here and there echoed by the tinkling of pianos on the hire system, now and then drowned by the postman's knock or the rattling of commercial Jehus, who by-and-by have to look out for perambulators. And ah! at times there comes a gloomier van to doors that must open for grief as well as for joy; then poor comfort it is to aching hearts if their dear ones have not so far to travel to that freshly laid-out cemetery that makes such a weary journey from the inner parts of London, where not even the dead may rest. But if one go-cart be turned into a household tombstone, neighbour mothers are happier in setting on

their legs a brood of future citizens, who will grow up to know nothing of this suburb but as a great toy-box of bricks and mortar.

For New Kensington, East Hampstead, or whatever title it assumes, has pushed out apace till its spreading lava-flow half hides the scattered hamlets or groups of tumble-down cottages which may thus be preserved for a time like flies in amber. For example, look into the back roads of Tottenham, or beside the church of Walham Green, where to-day a Juggernaut procession of motor-cars would soon crush the eighteenth-century poet who still berhymed this "green" as truly rural. Your new district may well have an old church to make its moral centre, perhaps in some out-of-the-way corner of the parish; then spick and span fanes, in each shade of Anglicanism, bring their services within easy reach of any householder; and chapels of various denominations follow suit, from tin little Bethels to imitation Gothic towers and Vandal spires. Even before the perambulators peeped out on fine days, doctors' lamps and door-plates began to shine at corners not taken up by the flare of a public-house. Babels of school buildings rise above private roofs. Galaxies of shops break out along the main thoroughfares, promoted from "Lanes" to "High Roads" or "Broadways"; and ere their fronts have grown dingy, their windows glow on red and green omnibuses plying to some Crown or Spotted Dog, whereat, before it took the style of a hotel, the rustic borderer leisurely drank his beer and opened his ears to strange tales of

what went on in London, whose lights, if they have not lured him into its tempting glare, now stretch out to cheer his secluded home. The slow buses are shoved aside by tram-lines and motors, cause as well as effect of fresh growth. Humbly neighboured mansions and well-fenced parks are turned into public playgrounds for the young urban district, that soon develops an obscure but noisy school of local politics, and heaps up a debt as recklessly as any of your rich boroughs.

Thus, in the short lifetime of a generation, some square mile or two of fields and hedgerows has been turned into a permanent camp for one of London's legions. By this time our loving couple that were among its oldest inhabitants may no longer appear in the local directory. Have they prospered in the world, we must look for them in its Bayswaters or Bromptons. Have they failed, let us pity their hunt through some newer and cheaper suburb for a jerry-built roof over rheumatic bones.

> Many at seventeen their fortunes seek,
> But at three score it is too late a week!

This portentous growth is indeed past praying for. "Every wind that blows from north or south, east or west, from India, China, America, or Australia, feeds it; every wheel that turns at home, every colonist who digs or watches his flocks at the antipodes, intensifies it. The marrow of London is in the backbone of the world; its blood is the blood of myriad kindred populations; its million hands seize upon the fruits,

the corn, the gold, the oil, and wine of every zone.' Its choice suburbs, indeed, may be considered as stretching out to the Riviera, the Swiss Lakes, or the Bohemian Forest. But, as yet, the county in which the greatest of modern cities chiefly lies has a remnant of rustic charms it cannot be too coy of displaying to the cosmopolitan multitude pent up within its spreading bounds. Nor are these busy throngs blind to the charms of Nature. As willingly as the yokel seeks its streets paved with gold and gleaming with lights, so the smoked Londoner loves to wash his eyes in greenery, or to bask in the "good gigantic smile of the old brown earth," if only on a holiday stroll to Hackney Downs or Wormwood Scrubs.

> Then thy spruce citizen, wash'd artisan,
> And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air :
> Thy coach of hackney, whisky, one-horse chair,
> And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl,
> To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow make repair ;
> Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
> Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.
>
> Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribbon'd fair,
> Others along the safer turnpike fly ;
> Some Richmond Hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
> And many to the steep of Highgate hie.

To leave his beehive behind him, the townsman of this age has to go further afield ; further and faster he does go by his trains, trams, and other machines such as those foreseen by Wordsworth in a spirit of prophesy, on which Byron's "spruce citizen" and "snug apprentice" can now

Glance along
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted.

Or those foretold by an earlier poet:

The filthy beasts that never chew the cud
Still grunt and squeak and sing their troublous song,
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among ;
But ay the ruthless driver goads them on,
And ay of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan.

Yet it is doubtful if dusty cyclist or goggled motorist see as much of the country as their slow-going grandfathers, and that not only because there is less of open country to see. In their haste to get away from the streets they might as well travel on the Underground Railway. These speedy wayfarers—"machines themselves, and governed by a clock"—go in the traces of a road, blinkered by its rows of suburban houses, and ready to drop for fatigue when taken out of the shafts of pace-making and record-breaking. Nay, I could name one philosopher of note who on Sundays became peripatetic, but never thought of leaving his hard-paved rounds till I opened his eyes by turning him on to grass for a dozen miles, by ways undreamt of in his philosophy.

Among authors, only popular novelists or journalists can afford to keep gigs, not to speak of motor-cars and the like, so one need not make a virtue of necessity. But no one should presume to write a book about

Middlesex

Middlesex without having tramped all over its hills and dales on the green lanes and winding field-paths, too many of which have been obliterated, but many are guarded more carefully than ever now that the sons of Mammon or of Nimrod would fain enclose them against the like of me. In taking these quiet byways between bustling highroads, I cannot help observing how few persons one meets, and these few—if not whispering lovers, for whom their primrose path cannot be too lonely—are apt to be men of my own time of life rather than our juniors, who, when the hoardings and the gate-money are not too high, may be seen packed into fields for their beloved sports, some score of them playing, perhaps, while some hundreds or thousands take the exercise of noisily looking on.

They may call me an old fogey, these spry youngsters who follow so keenly their elaborate pastimes, but I laugh in my beard and chuckle to think how in its day our generation was more active, though it made less fuss about its amusements. Schoolboys of that day did not need to be harnessed and driven to their games, undertaken with spontaneous mirth rather than with solemn zeal. We never wasted a holiday in applauding the feats of professional champions, and our wholesome spring, surely, had a better chance of a lusty winter. I sometimes go out a country ramble with a contemporary who has sons brought up at schools that make a religion of athletics ; then we have to leave his young hopefuls behind, lest they should be a clog to our gouty feet. I never—more's the pity

—can get any son of mine to encounter the stiles and the clay-bottoms of Middlesex. Such simple recreation is voted "too much fag" by an age that has little relish for sport unless spiced with excitement, costume, renown—that is, indeed, changing the very meaning of sport from doing something oneself to seeing something done by the idols of the gate and the gallery.

A popular writer has braved his public to flout this craze for athletic performances as distracting "muddied oafs" and "flannelled fools" from the great game of war. I would more humbly put in a word of lament over the decay of walking, when even the men of my time have too much gone astray after golf, which is simply an intermittent walk, attended with considerable expense, made in the unprofitable and unprofited society of caddies, and spoiled at every turn by the anxiety of driving little balls into ugly holes with instruments which a scientific observer has pronounced "singularly ill adapted for that purpose." As for the girls who stretch their limbs at this game, as at hockey or tennis, they may be not so ill employed, since walking over Middlesex fields seems contra-indicated by their boots and other impediments.

The right way to see and love Middlesex is at the jog-trot pace of Shanks' mare, breaking no wind and no records. In my guide, *Around London*, I have traced many paths which are also pointed out to willing eyes in other booklets of the kind. The present volume's aim is to take a more general and sweeping view of this county; yet I hope, as we trudge along

together, to give the reader many hints as to where and how he may explore its often hidden charms. As for matters of history, statistics, geology, and so forth, I refer him to the tomes in which I should have to look for such information, only advising him that a certain encyclopædia must not be trusted in its flattering of Middlesex soil as "mainly gravelly." Let him not go by that authority when choosing his boots for a tramp here. Nor should they be seven-leagued boots, as thus, in every direction, their first stride would take him over the border of a neighbour shire. On one side, indeed, less than four miles beyond the limits of a London borough, he can shake off the dust of this county in Herts; on another, he has only to cross the Lea to be in Essex before he seems to have got clear of London streets; on a third, any bridge of the Thames will take him into Surrey, from which, when all is said and seen, he may be in no haste to get back into Middlesex.

II

HAMPSTEAD AND HIGHGATE

THE Switzerland of Middlesex is a name that has been fondly given to those heights closing the vista up northward openings from Oxford Street. Hampstead ranks as a London borough, and so should stand out of the scope of our survey. But we cannot pass by the cream of the county's scenery, even though it has been half spoiled to make the choicest of suburbs, a crowd of homes for the classes, and a holiday resort for the masses, with suburblets and dependencies of its own in once outlying hamlets like South Hill, North End, Child's Hill, Belsize, and so on, not to speak of adjoining districts that cling to its skirts by such usurped titles as South Hampstead and West Hampstead.

Middlesex has other hills as high and bold as Hampstead, which owes its eminent amenity to a topping of Bagshot sand, here rarer than in Surrey, giving a dry and broken surface, natural nursery for heath and copsewood. Heedless digging out of sand and gravel has but increased the picturesque irregularity; and even the enclosures filched from the common in former

days add a charm of contrast, where the richer greenery of private groves or avenues masses itself above the scarred mounds and hollows, so wildly overgrown, so deviously threaded by embowered tracks among thorny tangles, bosky knolls, thickets of bracken and broom. It takes a poet to describe the manifold aspects of this half-tamed wilderness :

> Thine ever-shifting looks surprise :
> Streets, hills, and dells, trees overhead now seen,
> Now down below, with smoking roofs between—
> A village revelling in varieties.
> Then northward, what a range, with heath and pond,
> Nature's own ground ; woods that let mansions through,
> And cottaged vales, with billowy fields beyond,
> And clump of darkening pines and prospects blue.

The "village" itself, grown to a borough of more than eighty thousand people, may well be said to "revel in varieties," all the more now that its smart, newer streets make a frame for the intricate ascents on which stately mansions, snug villas, and tumbledown cottages stand huddled together ; and trim suburban roads are still here and there lined with the remains of park-like avenues. Hampstead is much changed in our time, but, more conscientiously than most suburbs, it clings to fragments of the past, unwilling to destroy scenes and buildings whose embalmed memories go to keep up its rents.

This favourite purlieu of London has larger books than mine devoted to its history. Through the mists of the past is dimly seen a *homestead* clearing in the

great Middlesex forest, that became a manor of Westminster Abbey and a hunting-ground of our kings; then, by-and-by, a resort of Londoners when they could stroll out safely across the open fields of St. Pancras and Marylebone. At the time of the Plague it made a camp of refuge, as it had done from a great flood of the Thames in the previous century, and would do again when, on its wooded heights, homeless families looked back to the glare of the Great Fire, which they took for a prelude of the Judgment Day. The Middlesex elections were at one time held on the Heath, serving also for a racecourse and fair-ground. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Epsom and Tunbridge Spas set the fashion, the chalybeate well at Hampstead became a resort, like other wells about London that had long enjoyed a name as miraculous remedies. The Hampstead Spa, still commemorated in Well Walk, soon came to be a scene of idle diversion and heady revels, more like to kill than cure, about which the village of lodgings grew fast, as Defoe notes, "even on the very steep of the Hill, where there's no walking Twenty yards together without Tugging up a Hill or straddling down a Hill." Several other pleasure-grounds sprang up in the vicinity, such as the once-famed Belsize Gardens, the most noble that Pepys ever saw, before the mansion was turned into a "folly-house," precursor of Ranelagh and Vauxhall. This suburban Vanity Fair advertised among its attractions "twelve stout fellows completely armed to patrol between Belsize and London"—a guard which had to

be increased as robbers swarmed like flies round the concourse of gamblers. The sign of the "Flask" preserves the name of another resort in vogue for a time. Our Bank Holiday Saturnalia seem a flicker of those more expensive high-jinks that went out in a snuff of scandal. The Long Room of the Wells is said to have been turned into a chapel, of better repute than their Sion Chapel, which, like the Fleet, was once notorious for illicit marriages. After ranking for a time as "one of the politest public places in England," in the latter part of the century Hampstead seems to have had a quieter reputation, when the philanthropist Thomas Day brought his wife here to be out of the world; and it figures as a secluded spot in the *Fool of Quality*, that Sandford-and-Mertonish romance so much admired by Charles Wesley and Charles Kingsley. Here also are laid some of the scenes of *Clarissa Harlowe*, and of *Evelina*.

By this time Hampstead was attracting famous residents as a retreat from the smoke and din of London. It had borne a humble name for laundresses from a time when they might have ducked Falstaff in its ponds. In the age of wigs and waistcoats we have glimpses of Steele, Addison, Goldsmith, Johnson, the Kit Cat Club, and, indeed, almost all the literary notabilities, as occasional lodgers or visitors; then about a century ago Hampstead drew together a galaxy of artists and poets, who found inspiration in its lovely surroundings. A later inhabitant, Coventry Patmore, tells us how Millfield Lane, leading round Caen Wood

to Highgate, used to be known as Poets' Lane, so often was it trod by sons of the Muses, whose publishers sometimes drove or rode to town from more spacious dwellings than sheltered Keats and Leigh Hunt. Caen or Ken Wood, which at one time belonged to the unpopular Lord Bute, reminds us of a constellation of lawyers, when the great Lord Mansfield settled here, and had for neighbour on the heath the eloquent Erskine; while Rosslyn House, lower down, was the seat of Wedderburn, another judge whose name is held in less honour—all three poor Scottish cadets who grew fat on the English bench. In our generation, its rents and rates are like to keep poets out of this paradise; but it is still well stocked with successful Scotsmen, and is said to make a promised land for the chosen people of the Old Dispensation, as Defoe says it did in his own day.

Among the many authors once at home here was William Howitt, to whose *Northern Heights of London*, or to books like Park's *History*, Baines's *Records*, and Mrs. White's *Sweet Hampstead*, I must refer my reader for a long list of celebrities. It is half a century ago since Howitt looked from his beloved heights, too truly prophesying how soon the open view would be engulfed in "this monster development of burnt clay, and buried for ever beneath its dingy piles! Look along the feet of these yet green and smiling hills—east and west, far and wide comes up, as it were, a giant army to desolate and trample them down. See that front rank of the great house-

army, far as the eye can reach before you, and on either hand, coming on with a step 'steady as time and inexorable as death.'" The same writer records attempts of successive Sovereigns to limit the growth of the capital, but no Canute could stay the advance of its swelling population, sucked together from all ends of the earth. Yet, since his day, something has been done here to stem the tide that threatened to drown so much beauty. The Heath itself stands up like an Ararat above the deluge of brick and mortar, rescued from further encroachment and spoliation, protected by Act of Parliament, even extended of late by reclamations or acquisitions of private property thrown into the public demesne.

Our way to the top is now to be made easy by a tube railway. Hitherto the ascent has been a true pilgrimage, the nature of the ground, as well as the gentility of the place, not much encouraging public conveyances. The titular Hampstead road, as we know, mounts from Camden Town, past Chalk Farm, once a quiet spot notorious for duels, now a noisy railway depot ; up Haverstock Hill, where a street name recalls the abode of Sir Richard Steele ; then by Rosslyn Hill to the steep and irregular winding of the High Street. Hampstead Heath Station lies off to the right, at South End, the foot of the Lower Heath. Further to the other side, through the Belsize district, is the Swiss Cottage Station of the Metropolitan line. When this was a newly-made terminus, I lived on the top of Hampstead Hill, and my way home was by a field-

path, with a bad name for garrotters, that is now Fitzjohn's Avenue, the smartest and most expensive street in North London, though architectural purists may gnash their teeth over its eclectic amenities. Its young trees, now beginning to give some shade to the seats along this broad avenue, lead up to the Church quarter, where old buildings have mainly gone down before new ones, but still Church Row shows a blotched face of mellow comeliness from the days when Mrs. Barbauld kept a school here ; and the Soldiers' Orphan Asylum to the right represents at least the site of what was Bishop Butler's home, and before him Sir Harry Vane's. Exploration on this side would reveal a bit of old Hampstead that may take rank as a picturesque slum. On the other side, the slope below the church is seamed by the devious roads of the Frognal quarter, in which lived that lover of London and its suburbs, Sir Walter Besant. It is well known how death cut short his preparation of a Metropolitan survey on a huge scale. The materials he left behind him have been partly used for a series of small volumes under the general title of *The Fascination of London ;* and in one of these, half devoted to Hampstead, * we are told how the Frognal Priory that once flourished here was a mere mock-antique folly of a middle-class Horace Walpole.

Hampstead Church is more admirable for its situation than for its structure, which dates from the

* *Hampstead and Marylebone*, by G. E. Mitton. Edited by Sir Walter Besant. A. and C. Black.

eighteenth century, and shows the peculiar feature of the chancel being at the west end. The pretty churchyard has fine peeps of prospect and several notable graves. Here is buried Sir James Mackintosh, the reformer so warmly praised by Macaulay. Close to each other lie two old neighbours at Hampstead, Lucy Aikin and Joanna Baillie, who share the fate of a literary fame brighter for their own generation than for ours. In the church it was left to American admirers to place a bust of John Keats, whose name has shone far and wide since his obscure sojourn where he loved

> To find with easy quest
> A fragrant wild, with Nature's beauty drest.

Incledon, the singer, is buried inside. Of quaint epitaphs there appears only one, to Mr. John Hindley. Most of the monuments are of an elegant type, answering to Hampstead's later character. The tomb to be first sought out, under the south-eastern wall of the church, is Constable's, painter of so many scenes from his "sweet Hampstead," which has had as strong attraction for artists as for poets. Collins, Romney, Linnell, Blake, Clarkson Stanfield, were some of those familiar here. In the extension of the burial-ground across the road, by the railing at the lower end, lie the cremated ashes of Gerald du Maurier, the popular Punch artist, who lived at New Grove House a little way above. Sir Gilbert Scott was not the only distinguished architect who has made his home near Hampstead Church.

But we shall never get to the top if we linger beside all such memorials of renown, which may be sought out by the help of Miss Mitton's book above mentioned. Heath Street, mounting from Church Row, comes into the backbone line of High Street. Hence the explorer may lose himself in the labyrinth of steep roads and lanes winding upwards, to come out where the Heath opens at about its highest point, recorded by a tablet, on a house off the right of the main road, as being level with the top of St. Paul's. If one stray too far to the right, the spire of Christ Church makes a beacon towards the Lower Heath, by the edge of which is the way up from Hampstead Heath Station, passing, below this church, the tall elms of the Well Walk, that was the centre of Spa gaieties. If one bear rather to the left, that course should lead out on the Judges' Walk, a grandly-shaded terrace looking over the West Heath and the country beyond. This gets its name from a tradition that, in the Plague year, the law-courts were held at Hampstead *al fresco*, suitors from infected and non-infected quarters keeping to opposite sides of the ridge running on from the pond at the head of our main line of ascent.

The open plateau here, marked by a round pond and a flag-staff, may be taken as a central spot from which to orient ourselves. The view, weather permitting, is a noble one, the most prominent feature to the right being the dome of St. Paul's, and to the left the spire of Harrow-on-the-Hill, rising over the Welsh Harp Water, with, perhaps, a glimpse of Windsor Castle.

Bounded more closely to the north by the Barnet ridge, it is said by writers of a less smoky age to take in the Laindon Hills of Essex eastwards, and in the other direction the spire of Hanslop, a few miles from Northampton.

The ridge road onwards separates the Upper and the Lower Heath, the former on the left the more wildly broken expanse, the latter sloping more barely, with squashy patches, to the line of ponds, along which it makes an open playground. Close at hand, in the hollow to the east, peep up the chimneys of the Vale of Health, a curious gathering of tightly-packed houses fringed by tea-gardens and dominated by a big public-house, the whole looking as if it did not quite know what it meant to make of itself. This colony must have lost the sanitary reputation it had when Leigh Hunt lived here, visited by Keats, Shelley, and other disciples of the "Cockney Poet" school. Beside it is the highest of the chain of ponds separating Hampstead Heath from Highgate Fields, going to fill that "river of wells" which once ran above ground as the Fleet, so much of a river that an eighteenth-century picture in the Guildhall shows barges riding upon it at Holborn; and so late as Victorian days its upper bed could be traced beside the Fleet Road that records it below Hampstead Heath Station. From this bank of clay, with its sand cope breaking into springs, rise other streams that flow under London, and come to light in the park waters of the West End, their hidden course marked by such names as Kilburn, Westbourne,

Tyburn, St. Mary-le-Bourne, Brook Street, as by the crooked shape of Marylebone Lane. The ponds, when first formed or improved, were actually used as a water-supply, but are now kept as a reserve in case of fire, one of them, like one at Highgate, serving for a bathing-place.

Advancing on the ridge road, we pass "Jack Straw's Castle," a famous old tavern that holds its head high after catering for patrons like Dickens and Macready. I bear in mind nearly forty years with what dignified pity the head waiter handed back his tip of twopence to a country parson not duly aware of this being no common public-house. Here, to the left, goes off at an acute angle the Hendon Road, dividing the Upper Heath into its west and north sections. Above the latter the ridge road runs straight on to that other old hostelry, the "Spaniards," in the garden of which Mrs. Bardell was arrested while carousing with her friends on the elusive profits of her action against Mr. Pickwick. A landmark at this further end is the conspicuous group of Italian pines that have figured on many a canvas, so as to be perhaps the best-known feature of Hampstead scenery. On the right of the ridge road here the Lower Heath has a park-like aspect, borne out by a large red mansion intruding itself towards the edge of Caen Wood. But the most richly ragged part of the common, sweetest in blossom-time and glorious in autumn, lies to the other side.

To see the Upper Heath at its best one should descend upon it from outside the buildings about

"Jack Straw's Castle," making towards the Leg of Mutton Pond at the western edge. Keeping round this edge to the north, one presently comes to the grounds of Golder's Hill, seat of Sir Spencer Wells, and after his death saved from the builder to make a public paradise, where, indeed, as often happens in such cases, the mansion has proved to be rather a white elephant. Beyond this, among a cluster of refreshment-houses, across the Hendon Road, their doyen is the "Bull and Bush," with its old-fashioned garden, traditional resort of Addison, Garrick, Hogarth, Sterne, and other celebrities. Next is reached the double hamlet of North End and Wildwood, a charmingly secluded group of cottages and mansions, one of them North End House, famed as the gloomy retreat of the great Lord Chatham. We might hence gain the Hendon Road up a grand avenue of chestnuts faced by lime-trees, which is not always discovered by wanderers on the Heath. But the leisurely explorer is advised to hold on to the common beyond the houses, and there turn left to a knoll commanding an expanse of green, bordered by the Hendon heights beyond the Finchley Road. At this edge of the Heath a scheme is on foot for planting a "Garden Suburb," as homœopathic remedy against any eruption of vulgar building.

Still keeping to the edge of the Heath, one comes up to its northern end by that fragmentary avenue of storm-beaten pines near which Erskine House stands beside the "Spaniards," according to one story so named as having been once the residence of a Spanish

ambassador, while another explanation of the sign makes its origin like that of a more widely famed *Keller*, whose landlord was an *Auerbach* man. At the time of the Gordon Riots this inn was kept by a man who seems to have passed for a Spaniard among his neighbours, of one of whom he well earned grateful favour. When Lord Mansfield's town-house had been burned by the mob, a body of rioters swarmed out to attack Caen Wood, but were cunningly delayed by this landlord with free supplies of drink till soldiers could be brought up to protect the judge's mansion.

Beside the road onwards now swells, to the right, a noble mass of timber in the park of the Earls of Mansfield, who still possess Caen Wood, while they have another most enviable home at Scone Palace on the Tay. If ever this family were driven to mend their fortune, like others of our aristocracy, by marrying a Chicago millionaire's daughter, they might choose rather to sell such a valuable property, which as yet has been kept safe from the suburban builder. But the episcopal estate on the other side of the road has ceased to give sanctuary to Nature, as we may see by Bishopswood Avenue, running off towards East Finchley, and further threats of streets in this direction, though opposite the gate of Caen Wood, below the "Spaniards," a field-way still leads to the "Five Bells" of Finchley.

Under the modest title of Hampstead Lane, the main road now mounts and winds up to Highgate

Church, which may be gained in other ways from Hampstead. Round Caen Wood passes that Poet's Lane, now too prosaically fenced in, and leads to the Highgate Ponds, beneath a height studded with mansions and grounds. The east side of Hampstead Heath, beyond its line of ponds, merges into the Highgate Fields, bought for the public at a king's ransom, less wild than the adjacent playground, but fitter for the games that spangle this expanse of open slopes. Towards the north side will be seen a tree-planted tumulus, about which hangs some misty popular legend of the flight from Boadicea's defeat at Battle Bridge by the Fleet River, close to King's Cross Station. It has been opened and explored, though not thoroughly, without any remains being discovered. On the southern edge swells up Parliament Hill, formerly known as Traitors' Hill, since here the gunpowder plotters proposed to watch their explosion, where smoke too often hides a fine view over London, beyond the further expanse of playing-fields named from the Gospel Oak, an old preaching station. By this height there is a way across from Hampstead Heath Station, above which cluster the houses of South Hill, one of several outlying suckers of this favourite suburb.

Highgate makes a worthy neighbour to Hampstead, not standing quite as high in the world, but with a dignity and distinction of its own, and no small wealth of treasured memories. Its steep ascents have not been so much invaded by mere smartness; the face towards Hampstead, at least, shows quality rather than quantity

in its colonization. So, on the height rising from a welter of lower suburbs, it better preserves the roomy amenities of the time when "Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate . . . a kind of Magus, girt in mystery and enigma, his Dodona oak-grove whispering strange things, uncertain whether oracles or jargon"; and among other pilgrims to the lofty shrine came one not over-devout Scot, who could note how "wide sweeps of flowery, leafy gardens, their few homes mostly hidden, the very chimney-pots veiled under blossomy umbrage, flowed gloriously downhill, gloriously issuing in wide-tufted, undulating country, rich in all charms of field and town."

The approaches from Lower Hampstead fall into the line of West Hill, to the foot of which road run tramways and buses through Kentish Town, that has undergone a certain social subsidence since from his windows here Leigh Hunt could look out on Caen Wood. But as we hence begin the ascent to Highgate, on the right is passed a model village, in quite baronial style, guarding the approach to Holly Lodge, seat of the late beneficent millionaire Lady Burdett-Coutts, whose mother was Coutts the banker's daughter, and her father Sir Francis Burdett, that firebrand of radical reform, cooling down in later years so as to be taunted with his "*re*cant of patriotism"—epigram which seems a reading backwards of Horace Walpole's gibe against Whitfield, who "had not recanted, only canted." This lady's great wealth fell to her by inheritance through the will of her maternal grandfather's second wife, a

marked figure in the society of a century ago, who had been Miss Mellon the actress, and came to be Duchess of St. Albans in the end. The lucky heiress, who perhaps suggested Miss Dunstable in Trollope's novels, found her hand sought by many suitors, among them Prince Louis Napoleon ; but, like Miss Dunstable, she was long in making her choice. Her friend Queen Victoria honoured her with a peerage in her own right ; and, with national benedictions, a place was made for her in Westminster Abbey.

Higher up, this road is bordered by many fine mansions, among which the "Fox and Crown," while it stood, had special license to display the Royal Arms, in token of the gallantry of its landlord, who at the risk of his life stopped the young Queen Victoria's carriage when the horses had almost run away down a hill that at any pace should be descended with caution. On the right stands the Church, a modern one, notable for its far-seen spire, and for the monument inside to S. T. Coleridge, who spent his last days peacefully at No. 3, The Grove, that quiet row of houses to the left behind the shady green, blocked up by a reservoir. He is buried in the vaults beneath Highgate School above, which was the site of the old church.

Below the present church the grounds of the old Mansion House on the slope have become a cemetery, bisected by the lane coming up past Holly Lodge. The situation of this makes it the finest of London's burial-grounds, having from the terrace at the top an open view over the northern suburbs, too much blocked

up by private enclosures on other sides of the hill. Many celebrated persons lie here, from Faraday to Tom Sayers, among them George Eliot, whose grave in the lower part is inscribed with her own lines :

> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence.

The cemetery adjoins the beautiful park presented to his neighbours by the late Sir Sydney Waterlow, beyond which we get on to the steeper ascent of Highgate Hill, a line more thickly strung with historic interest. This road comes up from the great artery of London that was once a veritable *Hollow-way*. At the foot of the hill the Whittington College Almshouses commemorate the name of that fortunate-unfortunate youth who here heard Bow Bells calling him back to be Lord Mayor of London. The very stone on which he may have sat down is seen incorporated in a lamp-post a little way up the hill. In our day, with his last copper, he might have rested his stiff legs in a cable tramcar, soon carrying him above a roar of traffic that would drown Bow Bells, even if they had not to be rung gingerly for fear of bringing down their tower. Higher up, where Hornsey Lane goes off to Crouch End, he would pass a Roman Catholic church and monastery, whose dome makes a landmark from more than one point of view. Above this comes Waterlow Park, the mansion in which, Lauderdale House, is believed to have been once occupied by Nell Gwynne ; and a brass in the wall outside marks the abode of Andrew Marvell.

On the other side of the road, Cromwell House, with its neighbour, Ireton House, now a convalescent home, is said to have been built by the Protector for his son-in-law Ireton. A little higher on that side stood Arundel House, where Lord Bacon died of a chill caught in the unlucky experiment of getting out of his coach on Highgate Hill to stuff a fowl with snow.

At the top, beside Pond Square, which is Highgate's quiet Charing Cross, this road converges with those coming up by West Hill and from Hampstead Heath. Here the "Gatehouse Inn" preserves the memory of that high gate at which the Bishops of London, as lords of the manor, levied toll upon vehicles passing over the hill, a privilege that appears to have been originally granted by Edward III. to a hermit who undertook to keep the roads in repair. His turnpike hermitage is supposed to have been on the site of the old church, now occupied by Sir Roger Cholmeley's school. Till a century ago the Great North Road bravely mounted to this gate, when from the windows of the Gatehouse could be seen a dozen other hostelries, their common sign those famous horns that proclaimed them a resort of junketing Cockneys, who, as well as passing travellers, received the freedom of Highgate by "swearing on the horns." This was a burlesque pleasantry of more or less coarse features, which long survived through the rites of libation kept up to the profit of that conservative trade, the licensed victuallers. An essential part of the ceremony was a fee drunk for the good of the house. The origin of it is obscure, but it may have arisen as a

verbal play on drinking from a horn, as seems to have been the custom in "Drunken Barnaby's" time. The classic form of the oath is preserved in Hone's *Year Book*, with an illustration by George Cruickshank. The initiated one was called on to swear that he would not eat brown bread if he could get white, nor drink small beer if he could get strong, nor kiss the maid if he could kiss the mistress, always with certain reserved cases, the conclusion being, "Kiss the horns, or a pretty girl if you see one here, and so be free of Highgate." Recent research has not shown the horns exhibited over any Highgate inn, yet no lack of girls deserving to be kissed, in strict accordance with police regulations.

From the school the line of that old North Road drops to converge with the modern one coming round the east side of the hill. The latter may be gained at once down Southwood Lane, which has pretty peeps between its houses, and at the lower end some fine old trees, relics of a noble seat. This brings us into the present highroad at Highgate Station, where turns off the way to Muswell Hill beside Highgate Woods, a trim pleasure-ground of lawns and low thickets traversed by arched alleys and glades, in which one might well forget being not yet clear of London suburbs. On the opposite side of the Muswell Hill Road, Queenswood makes another shady park, its groves well displayed in the hollow formerly known as Churchyard Bottom. Through it one comes out in view of Hornsey, where a fresh forest of houses appears beyond a gap of green playing-fields.

Middlesex

This young Middlesex borough of over 70,000 people must not be passed over without notice, though it does not hold up its head like its "classy" neighbours. Yet Hornsey is as old a place as any of them, once boasting lordly seats and parks, now turned into streets and playgrounds; and while its character is rather for respectable snugness and smugness, it has still some picturesque nooks. Indeed, proud Highgate itself, into which runs also the London parish of St. Pancras, is in large part a municipal dependency, as it was once a chapelry of the parish whose name seems better represented by the old form Harringay, "field of hares," as it may well have been, like its namesake at the opposite end of the county. Hornsey's new Church overshadows an ivied tower of the old one, beside which the most distinguished tomb is that of Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, whose first pleasures of memory belonged to Stoke Newington Green. Tom Moore lived for a time at Muswell Hill, in a cottage named "Lalla Rookh," said to have been formerly a rural retreat of Abraham Newland, the most popular prose author of his day as signing the Bank of England notes. I mentioned him in *Surrey* as the traditional godfather of Newland's Corner, but I see the *Dictionary of National Biography* allows him no *villeggiatura* further than Highbury, and states that he never slept out of the bank till his retirement. Let the local antiquaries look into this matter, one of whom, Mr. R. O. Sherington, has published an interesting little book about the parish. All traces of antiquity

are like to be swept away by a growth so rapid that Mother Shipton's portent, Highgate Hill standing in the middle of London, would appear now no such impossibility, if the city did not spread as fast in other directions.

But the lion of Hornsey is the Alexandra Palace, that stands more conspicuous than beautiful on Muswell Hill, most of it, indeed, in the adjoining parish of Wood Green. This northern rival of the Crystal Palace, opened a generation ago, at the same distance of six miles from Charing Cross, had a career of intermittent unprosperity as a speculation, but now that it is public property its fortunes seem to be on the mend. The building contains much the same quasi-educational attractions as the Crystal Palace, combined with all the fun of a fair. Inside is boasted the "greatest cycle track in the world," and the lower part of the park on the Tottenham side was laid out as a race-course. On the higher side, about the Muswell Hill entrance, is a grove preserving some fine trees. In the Coronation year this made the scene of a lively encampment of colonial troops, who did not keep the *Pax Britannica*, since our white fellow-subjects proved too ready to resent the manner in which black or brown auxiliaries were treated as men and brethren by the local nursery-maids.

From Muswell Hill one has a wide view of green ridges vanishing under brick. To the east, indeed, appears a new prospect, the flat valley of the Lea, bounded by Epping Forest. From other open points

on these northern heights of London, one sees Middlesex in its more characteristic aspect of waves of land swelling out of green troughs and breaking into a foam of structures of all shapes and sizes, from tombstones to palaces. This scenery we can best explore by following the lines of the main roads that run north and west out of London. On that more crowded area let us now turn our backs, having reached its official edge at the further end of Hampstead Heath, and again on Highgate Hill.

III

THE GREAT NORTH ROAD

To not every Londoner of this generation is the Great North Road as well known even by name as the Great Northern Railway running near it. The highway that led so many a hopeful youth across the northern heights, to see the lights of London at last shining before him, has more than once shifted its course, and now falls into the Metropolis by a delta of branches, among which one might be at a loss to pick out the main stream. Its original course seems to have been by Hornsey, Muswell Hill, Colney Hatch, and Friern Barnet, where it may still be followed as a pleasant byway of winding ups and downs joining the present road at Whetstone. That chain of muddy, rutty lanes, as it was in old days, becoming worn out by traffic, the Bishops of London, through whose land it passed, made a new road straight over Highgate Hill. Those spiritual stepfathers were more concerned about collecting their tolls than sparing horseflesh; but, as Bishops ceased to be great lords, both clergymen and laymen began to have a conscience of what is due to animals. Proposals to divert the

road round this trying steep were for a time baffled by the opposition of landowners holding jealously to their parked seclusion. Not till about a century ago was constructed the road which skirts Highgate Hill on the east, at first meant to be carried out through a tunnel on a smaller scale, like the grotto leading from Naples to Pozzuoli. The tunnel, however, fell in before it was opened, and gave place to a deep cutting spanned by the archway on which Hornsey Lane crosses it, a structure recently rebuilt. This Archway Road, as it is called, may claim to be the main northern highway. But motorists and cyclists from the West End are much more familiar with the Finchley Road that, passing on the other side of Hampstead Heath, converges with the eastern line at North Finchley.

Finchley is a very wide word, as I can tell, who, while yet a stranger to Middlesex, paying a visit here, found myself let in for a dark walk of over half a dozen miles to the Finchley Road Station. Even further this parish spreads along the lower heights beyond Hampstead and Highgate, including dependencies with by-names of their own. Till enclosed early in last century, it contained much open land, like that Finchley Common famed in Hogarth's picture and in the Newgate Calendar; Sydney Smith calls it the most notorious haunt of highwaymen in England when he was young, as Tom Jones and Partridge had reason to understand. A rough patch of it still holds out on the right hand of the eastern road, but hardly large enough to parade a regiment of the Guards, or to

afford a stage for any thrilling chase of Dick Turpin or Jack Sheppard. The airy high ground once used for military encampments is now set with strings and knots of houses, grouping themselves most thickly at three points—Church End, East Finchley, and North Finchley—the last-named being the apex of the triangle they form, and the first the nucleus of the parish.

Between these straggling suburbs are still green fields, groves of elm and beech, and footway hints of vanishing rusticity ; while much of the ground has been taken up by huge cemeteries on the heights once clearly outside of London. Electric trams and motor-buses seem at present in need of a good word, which they might have from anyone who had seen the Great North Road before its tram-line was made. Two or three years ago a pitiable sight here on hot Sunday afternoons was groups of flower-burdened women in black, waiting to struggle for room on the insufficient public vehicles that tugged heavy loads towards the resting-places of their dead. Where so many sad and weary mourners were often disappointed of a lift, tram-cars from Holloway now spin by the gates of the adjacent Islington and St. Pancras burying-grounds. The Finchley Road is not yet laid with rails ; but up it steer a fleet of motor-buses that have their haven at the "Swan and Pyramids" in North Finchley, some of them voyaging southwards as far as the distant "Elephant and Castle."

The Finchley Road emerges into open country at Child's Hill, just beyond the London boundary. Further

back, indeed, near the cemetery at Fortune Green to the left of the road, there is a most rustic-looking farm and a fine old avenue, making the first stage of a field-way to Hendon, soon spoiled by a sewage farm and an isolation hospital, but recovering from this infection when it has crossed the Brent. The road to Hendon turns left from the highway through the village and string of villas called Golder's Green, a name that takes in the red-brick tower on the right, marking the new Golder's Green Crematorium, beside a Jewish cemetery, five miles from the Marble Arch. The tube railway passing under Hampstead Hill now threatens to break up this pleasant stretch of the road, where at present lanes and paths run off to Hendon and the Brent Valley. So London stretches its tentacles towards Hendon, as yet swimming freely on its sea of green bounded by the Finchley and the Edgware Road, from which latter we shall visit it further on.

From the hamlet of Temple Fortune, with its " Royal Oak " bus station, where a rash suburb seems to have budded too early, the road, again as yet between hedges, mounts for a long mile to Finchley's Church End and G.N. Railway-station. Here, nearly six miles from Lord's Cricket Ground, the Finchley Road behoves to be known as the Regent's Park Road. The little Church, containing some old brasses, stands to the left on a road coming in from Hendon, where it has been rather dwarfed by Christ's College opposite, once a semi-private school, now acquired by the local authorities. In the pleasant churchyard the most

noticeable tomb is an obelisk over Major Cartwright, that firebrand of Radical reform in his day, who in ours, perhaps, might pass for a cautious Conservative.

Church End has still some traces of its village life ; but most of Finchley is a suburb of too monotonous respectability, now overshadowing our road for a couple of miles or more. On the west side it drops to the course of the Dollis Brook, the Brent's longest stream, beyond which the swelling ground lies still open in meadows or parks, with green lanes and footpaths leading over to the ridges of Mill Hill and Totteridge. From Nether Street, for instance — the valley road parallel with the highway—by a lodge gate is marked an avenued footway for Mill Hill, that leads finely across the Dollis Brook to mount on a golf-course beside the grounds of Nether Court. It seems as if all the parks of Middlesex are like to be usurped upon by that greedy game of golf, so much more at ease in its native barrens, or on the heaths of Surrey. There may soon be as many clubs of Londoners as in all Scotland; and yet a bitter cry goes up from long waiting-lists of would-be members, eager to find room on links of any pretensions. Of such a candidate it is told that, in his impatience, he addressed the secretary, asking whether his admission were barred by social ineligibility or by want of " form," and received on a postcard the curt reply, *Both.* But if we drop into golf stories, our progress along the North Road will be bunkered ; so from this hint of an attractive deviation let us return to its macadam. The word is " Fore !"

At Tally-Ho Corner, about a mile beyond Church End, the Finchley Road converges with the main highway coming by the "Bald Faced Stag" of East Finchley, with cemeteries and other prospects on its right. Past the seven-mile-stone there is an ascent to the turning for Colney Hatch at Fallow Corner, where the top of tramcars gives a wide view towards the the Alexandra Palace. To the right here lies some pleasant scenery about the great asylum of Colney Hatch, name worthy of a better fame, which its conscious dwellers would fain dissemble under the undimmed title of New Southgate. But, on the whole, this makes a less pleasing way than the other.

From North Finchley the united roads run on another long mile between houses, a remarkable number of them public-houses and other places of refreshment. Thus we pass imperceptibly into Whetstone, where comes in Friern Lane from Muswell Hill, by Colney Hatch and Friern Barnet, which is the oldest and prettiest, but not now the busiest, way out of North London. By-roads and paths go off on this side, over the Great Northern main line, towards Southgate and East Barnet. On the other side, where runs the branch line to High Barnet, one can soon strike across to the quiet amenities of Totteridge; and from Totteridge station, close to the highroad, a path leads on up the Dollis Brook to High Barnet. But when the road itself brings us again into something like open country, it passes for a time out of Middlesex, its boundary here so labyrinthine that one has known a very policeman doubtful as to

which county he was patrolling. Between Totteridge and Barnet a long forked tongue of Hertfordshire is thrust into Middlesex, licking up some of the fairest scenes hereabouts for a county that has no need to be greedy of loveliness. It is thus that our shire's waist becomes pinched up to a breadth of about eight miles, between Colney Hatch and the Thames. The North Road crosses the border more than a mile short of High Barnet, where for a time the tramway stopped at the top of a hill, as if taking breath to mount the steeper rise into the town, in the upper part of which we come back into Middlesex. On this ascent into Barnet, by its railway station, almost for the first time we get on either hand wide and open views of the fine landscapes that have been too much butchered to make London homes and holidays.

Barnet is another widespread name. Friern Barnet —Friar's Barnet—was site of a monastery, now two or three miles behind us to the east of our road. A mile or two north of this lies East Barnet, with its suburban outgrowth, Oakleigh Park. Modest as East Barnet looks, its secluded old Church seems to have been the core of all the Barnets. A little way further north, on the main line of the Great Northern Railway, New Barnet has become a distant Metropolitan suburb overlaying the hamlet of Lyonsdown. Then, a mile to the west, eleven miles from Clerkenwell, Chipping Barnet—*i.e.*, *Cheaping* or Market Barnet—answering to the *alias* of High Barnet by its elevation of 400 feet, still shows character as an old independent

town, especially about the far-seen tower and spirelet of its restored church, on the brow of the ridge. Here goes off westward an airy road to Elstree, leading in a couple of miles by Arkley to Barnet Gate, a mere hamlet about an old windmill and an inn, from which a very rural footpath edges a by-road to Highwood and Mill Hill.

Towards the parallel ridge of Totteridge, building is transforming Arkley Common, where were the once-sought Barnet Wells, visited by Pepys in 1667, who "there found many people a-drinking"; but half a century later Defoe records how the credit of this spa had dried up, the more accessible waters of Hampstead and Islington having come into vogue. Till the present day Barnet has kept the notoriety of its fair in September, the trade of which is drowned in a carnival of blended Cockney rascality and bucolic dissipation, so that it seems time to put down this blatant survival from when the town was practically as far off London as York is now. It will be remembered that at Barnet Oliver Twist fell in with that compromising companion, the "Artful Dodger," who, at the fair time, was likely enough to have business here. Dickens is said to have had Barnet again in view as "Thistledown," at which he denounced the mismanagement of a "Free" Grammar School, such as in his day so often gave cause for scandal. But unless that the way to it led up a hill, where on either side the fields were "puffed up into notice by a series of undulations," his description as little answers to the Barnet of our day as to its rebuilt

and reformed school beside the Church. The town enjoys several charitable foundations, from the seventeenth-century Jesus Hospital, designed for such old women as are not sorcerers, witches, tale-bearers, backbiters, drunkards, lunatics or otherwise objectionable, to the modern Leathersellers' Almshouses on the Elstree road. Its "Red Lion," "Green Man," and other ancient hostelries are further hints of a prosperity fed by the traffic of the Great North Road, which here throws off a hardly less-renowned branch to Holyhead.

Barnet is famed in history for the battle, 1471, where, as an old schoolmaster of mine puts it in a well-known school history, "every petal of the Red Rose was shattered from its stem"—a botanical metaphor to puzzle unimaginative schoolboys, who perhaps know more of this battle from Bulwer Lytton's *Last of the Barons*. Running on through the cheerful High Street, and by the common called Hadley Green, our road forks for St. Albans and for Hatfield at a triangular patch of grass on which an obelisk marks the traditional scene of Warwick's death. The battle-field seems to have been mainly to the right of the road, on Hadley Common, to which one turns off from the upper corner of Hadley Green, where the town almost runs into the village of Monken Hadley, with its ancient Church. As a rarer relic than its monuments, this restored, or rather rebuilt, church keeps on its tower a cresset that may often have served for beacon to wanderers in the wilds of Enfield Chase, and no doubt did its part in spreading the alarm of the Armada, for

at Hadley we are on one of the highest levels of Middlesex, in view of "bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor," where Macaulay starts the chain of fire-signals that would run to the north till "the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle." Close to the church will be seen the railed-in stump of an oak, haunted by misty memories of one Friar Bungay, whom Bulwer Lytton makes to figure in his story ; but this personage seems to have lived more than a century earlier, and to have shared the fate of Roger Bacon as being dubbed a sorcerer, through scientific curiosity in advance of their age. For an elm not far off is cherished a tradition of Latimer's preaching under it ; and if so, it must be a very patriarch of elms.

Hadley Common, Barnet's most beautiful purlieu, is the largest unenclosed fragment of Enfield Chase, a strip of woodland, interspersed with greensward, stretching for two miles along the ridge north-east of the town, all whose sweetheart couples might be lost in its bosky mazes. One can thread them by taking the road turning off at that venerable stump, to become a bridle-track along the edge of the woods, joined about halfway by a path coming up from New Barnet Station. This way is sacred to the pedestrian, though the cyclist is tolerated, if he care to plough through the roughness of its further end. It debouches at Cock Fosters, now a pretty hamlet of gentility about the inn which was once, no doubt, a resort of foresters, standing just off the road from Southgate to Potter's Bar.

As hitherto he has seen so little of the country from

closed-in highroads, the reader who has got to High Barnet on wheels might be glad to take his way homewards by a roundabout track that, safe from the proud dust of motor-cars, makes one of the greenest walks so near London, with fine prospects on all the Barnets. His first stage is along Hadley Common to Cock Fosters; then, by the spire of the church behind the inn, he will find a footpath which, crossing a road enters Oak Hill Park and drops over the Pymmes Brook to a road past the isolated church of East Barnet. At the Manor House here James Thomson is said to have been tutor, and he might still find scenes for the rural pictures of his *Seasons*, preserved by private grounds on the slopes opposite this church, half hidden in its shady enclosure. Behind it the Church Farm has been turned into the Philanthropic Society's Industrial School, by which goes a path that, beyond the Great Northern Railway main line, soon loses itself in the new roads of Oakleigh Park, leading into the highway at Whetstone. Perhaps a pleasanter way, as things are now, is to keep the road past the church till on its right runs up an embowered lane straggling across the railway into a road from Colney Hatch, on which one turns right for the tram-line. This round of some five miles from Barnet takes one roughly along the edge of that inlet of Hertfordshire, that, indeed, extends to Colney Hatch, a mile or two further south. Almost opposite the "embowered lane" mentioned above, goes off a turn in the other direction, which, crossing the Pymmes Brook, mounts past the opening

of a trim path to Southgate. But I fear to confuse my *guidees* in pointing out all the green ways still open on this side of the Great North Road here.

To return from our digression backwards: in the upper part of Barnet the Great North Road re-enters Middlesex to traverse its bluff north-eastern promontory. Here the road is a truly great one, well laid, well bordered, and well provided with guide posts giving not only directions, but distances on the by-ways. From the obelisk at the fork it skirts on the left Wrotham Park, the seat of the unlucky Admiral Byng, its woods hiding a white mansion that looks out conspicuously from the other side. To the right appears in a hollow the suburban smartness of Hadley Wood, a new quarter grown up about its station on the main Great Northern Railway line, which presently tunnels under our road. By Ganwick Corner and the "Duke of York," we come to Potter's Bar, the last Middlesex village, much transmogrified through villas and trim suburban roads, by which London breaks out again on the edge of its shire. This is three miles from Barnet, and five or six miles more through "pleasant Hertfordshire" would bring us to Hatfield, whence this road holds on by fat midlands, skirting fens and wolds, over fells and moors, through dales and glens, till at last it must be brought to a stand by the rushing tide of the Pentland Firth, after giving so many stages of scenery and adventure for imagination. I think it is Mr. John Buchan who insists how, among the world's roads, the breath of romance blows stronger on those pointing

to the Pole than on those belting the same latitude and hugging the same isobar.

The station of Potter's Bar lies a mile or so to the left, reached by an avenue-like way opening nearly opposite the "Old Robin Hood." This station also serves South Mimms, a goodly village with an old church, but not set in such rich surroundings as its neighbour, North Mimms, across the Hertford border. The direct way to South Mimms is the Holyhead Road, turning off from Barnet High Street at the "Green Man," which is all that a highway should be; but not much more can be said of it unless for its peep into Dyrham Park at the Dancers Hill cross-roads. Above the thirteenth mile-stone and the crossing of the Mimms Brook the pedestrian may look out for a group of farm buildings on the left, by which a path, crossing the road here, curves over fields to Clare Hall and a hospital near the south end of North Mimms. There a lane to the left, or a path a little further, leads out of Middlesex to the hamlet of Ridge, through whose churchyard begins another field-path running after a mile almost into the picturesque Hertfordshire village of Shenley; then a park-enclosed road of two miles more leads to the Midland station of Radlett on Watling Street.

But one must not be tempted to stray into another county, else much might be said of the road that turns right at the Potter's Bar Police Station for Northaw, Cheshunt, and Enfield. From Potter's Bar, on this side, another finely-bordered highway turns back to London,

through what was once Enfield Chase, by Cock Fosters and Southgate. At the leafy hollow, where a large board beacons to Hadley Wood Station, one can turn by it for a walk of two miles to Barnet, pleasantly reached over the upper part of Hadley Common.

The cross-road in the other direction leads in three miles to Enfield and the scenes of our next chapter, passing the north side of Trent Park, which got its exotic name from George III., when he gave a lease of it to Sir Richard Jebb, in reward for his services to one of the royal princes on a sick-bed at the Tyrolese Trent. Where the road touches the park, over the fence may be seen the remains of Camelot Moat, an overgrown enclosure of immemorial antiquity that makes one of the scenes in the *Fortunes of Nigel.* A later novelist may have picked up a hint here in the legend of such a "Lost Sir Massingberd" as is said to have hid himself in a hollow tree and perished miserably by falling into a well underneath. By the country-folk Camelot Moat seems best remembered as one of Dick Turpin's lairs; but all over the county linger memories of this worthy, whose spirit on rough nights haunts its lonely roads from Enfield Chase to Stanmore Heath, or did so till quite recently, when it is understood to have taken offence at the passage of motor-cars as not easily brought to "stand and deliver."

IV

EDMONTON AND ENFIELD

An older road north is the line of the ancient Ermyn Street, running out roughly parallel with the Great Eastern Railway to Cambridge, by the Middlesex side of the Lea. Defoe styles this the North Road, and states that more carriages came that way in his time than on any other road into London. But there are Londoners of our day to whom it is unknown beyond Shoreditch; and few foreigners find it out, though Americans might see here perhaps our best effort at one of their long city avenues. It is not, indeed, as long as Yonge Street, Toronto, which has laid itself out for thirty miles as a shadow cast before future greatness, and it may be surpassed by the "magnificent distances" of Washington or Philadelphia; still, this modest London thoroughfare holds an almost straight course for half a dozen miles from Shoreditch, past Dalston and Stoke Newington, over Stamford Hill, and through Tottenham to Edmonton. Here it makes a slight bend from the line of the ancient road; that a little to the left may still be traced in grassy and

sloughy stretches beside fragments of woodland, where one might believe oneself many miles from a busy highway. But for a few green gaps, which seem in the way of being filled up, the actual road as far as the edge of Hertfordshire and beyond has been shut in with houses, often spreading out so far on either side that the Edmonton census district is the most populous part of Middlesex outside London. Edmonton's name included one of the county's half-dozen Hundreds, which, in the more practical grouping for parliamentary representation, is divided under the titles of Enfield and Tottenham ; while Enfield, for its part, holds the distinction of being the largest Middlesex parish.

This is the road on which fared Hobson, the Cambridge carrier of Milton's day, whose rule that each horse must be hired in turn as it stood in the stable is said to have originated the phrase "Hobson's choice." It has also memories of Dick Turpin, who, according to the legend recorded by Harrison Ainsworth, leapt Black Bess clean over a donkey-cart at Edmonton as he spurred on to Ware, with the myrmidons of the law in hot pursuit. Another criminal hero of the neighbourhood was the pickpocket George Barrington, transported to Botany Bay in 1790, where he reformed himself to become a police superintendent, an author, even a poet, known by one trite couplet—

> True patriots all ! for, be it understood,
> We left our country for our country's good.

"Stop, thief ! Stop, thief ! A highwayman !" was

the cry naturally raised by those who saw John Gilpin racing along the road, its most famed hero to the general reader. There appears, indeed, some obscurity as to the first stage taken by the worthy linen-draper on his untamed steed. The text distinctly states that he passed through 'merry Islington'; but commentators differ as to whether by Aldersgate Street he gained the Essex Road, and thence struck across the line of the Green Lanes, or more directly attained the Kingsland Road, which seems his shortest line from Cheapside, but would soon bring him into the parish of Stoke Newington, a name perhaps omitted by poetic license as more intractable to the metre.

We can confidently follow his race beyond where the Seven Sisters Road comes in from Finsbury Park. Were the seven sisters of Tottenham those seven daughters who, with such comically lugubrious looks, kneel in a diminishing row along the Barkham monument in its Parish Church? The received legend makes them seven elms, whose successors stand railed in on the green at Seven Sisters Corner. From this landmark we hold up the road to another corner, where has been restored Tottenham High Cross, the name of which calls to mind shades as abiding as John Gilpin's. It was from Tottenham that Piscator and his friend set out to take their "morning draught" at the "Thatched House" of Hoddesdon, after a walk of over a dozen miles. It may have been in the garden of the "Swan" here that Izaak Walton in the flesh could stroll under a "honeysuckle hedge" and rest "in

a sweet shady arbour," rural amenities now much to seek about the Tottenham highroad, though in entering this parish it crossed the invisible boundary of London. By Tottenham Hale one might now turn down to the Lea, that ripples so sweetly through Walton's seventeenth-century Arcadia ; but one had better not.

> We have a vision of our own,
> Ah ! why should we undo it ?

On the other side of Tottenham's spacious Broadway, towards Hornsey, we might still find a remnant of green fields shrinking like the *peau de chagrin* in Balzac's romance. A height between this road and the Green Lanes has of late been laid out as a pretty park, overlooking the meadows of the Muswell Brook—mocked with the *alias* of Moselle—where the London County Council proposes to plant a new town of working men's dwellings. Socially, Tottenham has not much to boast of, Stamford Hill perhaps being its only purlieu on visiting terms with the West End. A century ago it had come down to snug and sober respectability, when it was much affected by Quakers and other Dissenters, and such names as Bernard Barton and John Williams, the missionary, marked its eminent natives. Still, its main thoroughfare wears a certain aspect of broad-brimmed sobriety and unpretentious comfort. But time was when this village rang with the stir of feudal chivalry, even before that burlesque "Tournament of Tottenham," sung by an English Cervantes of so early date that a quotation

would need a glossary. To lists set up beside Tottenham highway came "all the men of Islington, of Highgate, and of Hackney," their weapons flails, their shields baskets, their armour sheep-skins ; then Perkin the potter, "with doughtiness of dent," carried away the prize, the hand of the Reeve's daughter Tib, along with which went such trophies as a grey mare, a spotted sow, and a brood-hen. The fair lady was forthwith led to church, the beaten champions in her train, and rancour was drowned in a wedding-feast that lasted "all the long day" for those eupeptic heroes.

About the church can be traced Tottenham's nucleus of antiquity. When, on the right hand of the main road, we have passed the Sanchez Almshouses, founded by a Spanish confectioner who came to England with King Philip, a far from bonny opening named Scotland Green hints how this was once a royal manor, passing into the lordship of the Scottish Kings, and held in turn by the rivals Bruce and Baliol. The Bruces had a keep here, still extant in a modernized form. Bruce Castle became a school carried on by the Hill family, one of whom, after an experiment at educational reform noted in its day, rose to wider fame as the victorious champion of penny postage. The ivied mansion, no more like a school than a castle, housed young gentlemen till not long ago ; but, with its pleasant grounds, it has now been turned into a public resort.

At the north-west corner of this park stands Tottenham Church, half hid among trees that soften its in-

congruity, ranging from the old flint tower to the new brick chancel. One might well look in here for a sight of the Barkham and the Candeler monuments, each in its way an imposing specimen of such memorials in Stuart days, set in dim religious light by a rich show of coloured glass. A daughter of the Ettrick shepherd is buried, so far from her birthplace, in what Besant described as "a very good churchyard, full of interesting monuments of unknown people; and in the daytime you might wander there for a long time and learn quantities of history just hinted at in the bald, disjointed way common to tombstones. You might, I say, under happier conditions, but you cannot, because they have stuck up rows of spiky iron railings beside the path, so that no moralist, unless he have very long legs, shall ever be permitted to get any good out of the churchyard at all."

Into the neighbour parish Tottenham merges without a break in what was "all one continued street" so far back as Defoe's time. About half a mile beyond the latitude of the church, where the road swerves slightly to the right, a house on the left side is marked "No. 1, Edmonton." The next landmark here is the "Bell," with its fresco of that galloping citizen, cloak, hat, and wig flying in the air, by which this house claims connection with his wild career; but it has more than once been rebuilt, and may not occupy the site of the original resort for Cockney trippers, that would probably be farther on, towards the original village. The "Wash of Edmonton" seems another

doubtful point. No such obstruction is now found on the road, which in Tottenham was crossed by the Muswell or Moselle Brook, and beyond the "Bell" passes over the large Pymmes Brook, flowing from East Barnet, then farther on the Salmon Brook, from Enfield. This last is said to have been known as the Wash, a title repeated in the Wash of Enfield and of Cheshunt; but now that the streams have long been bridged over, the oldest inhabitants are not in one tale as to which was the ford splashed about by our Cockney Mazeppa

> Just like unto a trundling mop
> Or a wild goose at play.

The hedges and stiles that bordered the road in Cowper's day have vanished like its turnpike gates. Upper Edmonton in turn imperceptibly becomes Lower Edmonton, the old village now strung to London by leagues of houses. A long mile beyond the "Bell" is reached a fragment of Edmonton Green, where the poor "Witch of Edmonton" was burned in 1621. We may here desert the road, and its trams running on to a gap of still-open fields which the builder threatens to close; then again the industrial outliers of Enfield will shadow it almost continuously to the edge of the county. Let us turn up, by the Green and the station, to Edmonton Church, notable for its traditions of Archbishop Tillotson, and of another incumbent, Tate, the rusty psalmist, also of that "Merry Devil of Edmonton" that played such

tricks here in Henry VII's time, as for its joint memorial to Lamb and Cowper. Keats, as apprenticed to an Edmonton surgeon, is likewise commemorated along with Lamb by medallions in the public library.

The greenest memory of this parish and the next is Charles Lamb's, who ended his days at Edmonton in a little house on the way up to the church. It was occupied, when I last passed it, by a registrar of births, deaths and marriages, a tenancy to "arride" that very human spirit. No lover of literature will visit Edmonton without seeking out his and his sister's grave, which may be found by going on from the west end of the church to the tiny almshouses on the graveyard's further side, and there turning left on a railed path. About half-way along this, on the right side, overshadowed by a more pretentious tomb, a modest slab shows the epitaph by Cary, the translator of Dante—Wordsworth's tribute being rejected as long enough to fill a whole row of tombstones.

A path from the churchyard, bending on to the right by an old windmill, towards the New River and the Green Lanes, shows how much Edmonton has lost the rural charms it may have had when Lamb came to die here. For several years his home had been in the adjacent parish of Enfield, to whose hilly and shady beauties let us now set our face. Not that rural beauties appear to have had enduring attraction for Elia, who took any beer-shop as the goal of his restless walks, which also by choice were turned towards his familiar London. "To him the tide of human life

that flowed through Fleet Street and Ludgate Hill was worth all the Wyes and Yarrows in the universe ; there were, to his thinking, no Green Lanes to compare with Fetter Lane or St. Bride's, no Garden like Covent Garden." So says his friend P. G. Patmore, who could only guess at unselfish regard for his sister's health as the cause of that seclusion.

When Lamb's friends visited him at Enfield, they were sometimes in the way of taking the hourly Edmonton stage, and walking the two miles on. Another coach ran direct to Enfield, by which Henry Crabb Robinson was two and a half hours on the way, who again tramped it in little more than three hours. The London theatres were the loadstone that drew young Charles Cowden Clarke, walking both ways by what could then be called the quiet Green Lanes, now laid with an electric tram-line. Green lanes are a frequent feature of Middlesex scenery ; but these Green Lanes *par excellence* can no longer be held typical, as they run through the crowded homes of Stoke Newington and Hornsey, tantalizing a romantic soul with such names as Mount Pleasant and Wood Green. Yet this lively highroad has still some patches of its greens to show ; some stretches of private grounds turned into public demesnes, like Clissold Park and Finsbury Park ; some pleasant glimpses of the fenced New River, in Lamb's youth still open to the holiday explorations of his school-fellows. Beyond Palmer's Green it grows more truly rural, the Green Lanes winding up to Enfield in a manner not unworthy of

their name, with many tempting by-ways towards the Great Eastern Railway line on the right and the Great Northern Railway on the left, that would keep wanderers from going too far astray.

But the pleasantest way of reaching Enfield on foot is from the south-west side, where Pan still haunts fragments of the Chase. For this route one can turn off the Great North Road near its junction with the Finchley Road, making by Colney Hatch to Southgate, the birthplace of Leigh Hunt, who might still call this "a prime specimen of Middlesex" in its charms of "trees and meadows, of greenery and nestling cottages." Southgate Green also boasts the Walkers, a family of cricketers recorded in a bigger book than has been written about Leigh Hunt. Another way to it is from Bounds Green, leaving the present border-line of suburbia to cross the Pymmes Brook for the fine elm avenue of Broomfield Park, now a public playground, through which is reached the avenue-like road from Palmer's Green to Southgate Green.

The builder has made havoc here with Lamb's "unfrequentedest Blackberry paths that ever concealed their coy bunches from a truant citizen." But, beside the "Cherry Tree" on Southgate Green, one can take a footway leading into a road from the Green Lanes, along which road to the left, then turning, right, round the next corner, one finds a woodland path which makes one of the most sylvan walks so near London. Nearly a mile of it lead out upon the small Green of Winchmore Hill, where a snug old village forms the core of

a settlement spread loosely along its radiating roads. We are here a little to the west of the Green Lanes, and about two miles from the further line of road through Edmonton. Beyond the Green, after neglecting the turn to Winchmore Hill Station, the pedestrian crooks to the right over a railway-bridge, then presently on the left side of the road his path goes off almost straight to Enfield, across a road, through a market orchard, over a brook, up the slope of the Old Park, along the thickly-shaded bank of the New River, and by the Town Park, to the tongue of open sward opening between the older part of the town, and the west-end quarter known as Bycullah Park, built upon what was once a racecourse.

High-set Enfield turns its best face to the west, where travellers from Barnet are beaconed by a tall white spire rising over red roofs half hidden in swelling greenery. This spire does not mark the Parish Church, whose tower stands by the Market Place, where the Green Lanes road crosses that from Barnet to Ponder's End, close to the Great Eastern Railway station, distinguished as "Enfield Town." The Great Northern Railway branch station, towards the west end, which will now cease to be a terminus, is known as "Enfield." This name, indeed, is widely scattered, the Hertford road, to the east, being lined for two or three miles with the huge hamlets of Enfield Highway, Enfield Wash, and Enfield Lock. But the town of Enfield, linked to these offshoots only by a name, still preserves much of its spacious amenity, from the days

when it was a clearing in the forest turned into a royal chase. The Old Park, on the south side, has not lost its tradition of dignity as precinct of a Tudor palace, while the wider bounds of the hunting-ground, disforested and enclosed under George III., have shrunk into smaller parks about mansions whose modest title of Lodge recalls their origin, when only three such houses stood in a circuit of two dozen miles, the Chase bounds stretching from Southgate to the northern edge of Middlesex. The name of the Old Palace is fondly cherished for a remnant of building used till the other day as the Post-Office, at the present moment proclaimed "to let." In front this looks across the Market Place to the tower of the Church, the interior of which gains roomy effect from its prolonged aisles and sunken floor ; and it has monuments to show, the most remarkable being Lady Tiptoft's ancient altar-tomb, and the family group of effigies commemorating a Lord Mayor of Charles I's. time.

Beside this church are the new buildings of the Grammar School, which under Charles II. occupied the Old Palace, when its master was Dr. Uvedale, the botanist, by whom is said to have been planted the first cedar in England, still flourishing royally at the back of this building. A fruitful private seminary is now ill-represented by the Great Eastern station, the fine façade of the old building having in part been removed to South Kensington Museum as a noble specimen of moulded brickwork. Wren may have been the architect of a mansion which appears to have

been occupied by Isaac Disraeli, till he removed to London, just in time to make the future Prime Minister no native of Enfield. The house then became a school kept by Charles Cowden Clarke's father, with John Keats as its most illustrious pupil, who, after his apprenticeship at Edmonton, used to walk over to borrow books from his old teacher. Another school in the vicinity could boast two scholars of very different renown, Captain Marryat, and Babbage, the calculating boy, of whom it is remembered that he would get up in the small hours to study on the sly, whereas the future naval novelist was keen rather for play, and distinguished himself by running away from frequent scrapes and floggings, being once captured "in the horse-pond at Edmonton." Sir Ralph Abercromby also was an Enfield schoolboy, in days when the place made such a choice retreat from London as now is Tunbridge Wells or Leith Hill, and it can look back to older days when for wealth and dignity it held up its head above Kensington.

The younger Clarke's *Recollections of Writers* are thick set with names not yet forgotten, familiar to him when his father on their walks taught the boy to plant acorns that may now be stately trees. He knew a grandfather of Bulwer Lytton and a nephew of Gilbert White. He remembered a visit from George Dyer, his father's fellow-usher and rival in love at Northampton, whose name has been "pickled and preserved in humour" by his friend Lamb. From the school garden he sent a weekly basket of flowers, fruit,

and vegetables to comfort Leigh Hunt's imprisonment. He met Major Cartwright, the doughty Radical, then living at Enfield. There were other notabilities of the neighbourhood with whom the family of a liberal-minded schoolmaster might not come much in contact, ex-Lord Mayors, knights, and professional veterans. Abernethy, the rough-tongued surgeon, came here to die, and has a tablet in the church. At an earlier date Lord George Gordon, the Protestant firebrand, had lived hereabouts. Gough, the antiquary, is another name in a long list of notable residents that might be continued down to Walter Pater, whose childhood was spent on Chase side; and to its chequered shades, perhaps, he owed "many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which they most naturally presented themselves to him."

Tom Hood for a time had his home at Winchmore Hill, and in Hone's *Table Book* (1827) there is a caricature by him of Mary Lamb stuck fast on one of the high stiles common about Enfield and Edmonton. This is accompanied by a letter signed "Sojourner at Enfield," which, I must confess, made me an accomplice in deceiving readers of my guide, *Around London*. Till my eyes were opened by Mr. E. V. Lucas's edition of Lamb, I had not recognised this communication as one of Elia's farcical fibs, with its grave attribution of the sketch "probably" to Romney, and its fragment "in the handwriting of Cowper," going to show that the poet had designed a companion

piece to John Gilpin, which should deal with his wife's adventures while hanging about the "Bell."

Then Mrs. Gilpin sweetly said
Unto her children three,
"I'll clamber o'er this style so high,
And you climb after me."

But having climb'd unto the top,
She could no further go,
But sat, to every passer-by
A spectacle and show;

Who said, "Your spouse and you this day
Both show your horsemanship;
And if you stay till he comes back,
Your horse will need no whip."

The Clarkes had left their school before Charles Lamb settled definitely in "this vale of deliberate senectitude," so we do not understand that he here found the model for his *New Schoolmaster*. Charles Cowden Clarke made his acquaintance at Ramsgate, and afterwards visited him at Enfield, where from 1827 to 1833 the brother and sister lived in two adjacent houses on Chase side, first as tenants, then as lodgers of an uncongenial family next door. Both these houses, standing in a somewhat altered state, are piously marked by tablets; but in my experience not every Enfielder knows where to find them, so the pilgrim stranger may be directed to the straggling green beside "my old New River," on the way between the two stations; here he turns up the road marked "Clay Hill," and

may look for his double shrine on the right-hand side just before reaching the spire of Christ Church. This part of Enfield, somewhat bevillaed in our time, must then have been close to the fringe of green by-ways of which Clarke speaks more lovingly than Lamb. One seldom knows how far to take seriously the whimsical humorist's groans over the dullness of country life when fairly tried, nor his sighs for the "fresher air of London"; but there seems to be a vein of real feeling in such complaints as fill his letters from this exile—for instance, to Wordsworth:

O never let the lying poets be believed, who 'tice men from the cheerful haunts of streets, or think they mean it not of a country village. In the ruins of Palmyra I could gird myself up to solitude, or muse to the snorings of the Seven Sleepers, but to have a little teazing image of a town about one, country folks that do not look like country folks, shops two yards square—half a dozen apples and two penn'orth of overlooked gingerbread for the lofty fruiterers of Oxford Street, and, for the immortal book and print stalls, a circulating library that stands still, where the show-picture is a last year's Valentine, and whither the fame of the last ten Scotch novels has not yet travel'd (marry, they just begin to be conscious of the Red Gauntlet!); to have a new plastered flat church, and to be wishing that it was but a Cathedral. The very blackguards here are degenerate. The topping gentry stockbrokers. The passengers too many to insure your quiet, or let you go about whistling, or gaping—too few to be the fine indifferent pageants of Fleet Street. Confining, room-keeping, thickest winter is yet more bearable here than the gaudy months. Among one's books at one's fire by candle, one is soothed into an oblivion that one is not in the country; but with the light the green fields return, till I gaze and in a calenture can plunge myself into Saint Giles's. O let no native Londoner imagine that health, and rest, and innocent

occupation, interchange of converse sweet and recreative study, can make the country anything better than altogether odious and detestable! A garden was the primitive prison till man with promethean felicity and boldness luckily sinn'd himself out of it.

The writer of this was a man of moods, who, as his friend Coleridge has it:

> Pined
> And hungered after Nature many a year
> In the great City pent.

Before leaving the India House, Lamb "had thought in a green old age (O green thought) to have retired to Ponder's End—emblematic name, how beautiful!" No one now would choose a retirement at Ponder's End, that industrial eastern neighbour of Enfield overshadowing the Lea Valley with its tall smoke-stacks and long rows of workmen's homes. Yet just beyond the grimy hideousness of Ponder's End Station, the bridge leading over to Chingford Marshes gives a peep of the Lea that by moonshine might still make a trysting-place for shepherds and milkmaids. Daylight dulls all memories of romance with smoke and mist; then the name of Green Street seems a mockery among those of the outlying Enfields that for miles blotch the Hertford road with their confluent eruption.

These quarters depend upon various industries planted along the Lea, the principal of them a national factory of death and destruction which, two generations ago, brought Enfield's name into history with the rifles

made here. A century earlier the name of Enfield Wash flowed far and wide in public excitement over a puzzling story of crime, to stir, under George II., even more sensation in England than did the Tichborne case for our newspaper age. It was here that a servant-girl, Elizabeth Canning, professed to have been robbed and imprisoned by certain persons, one of them a gipsy woman, who, sentenced to be hanged, was saved by fresh evidence that convicted the accuser of perjury. In those days of rough-and-ready justice feeling ran strangely strong between partisans of the gipsy and of the servant, the latter's cause being championed by mob violence, while dozens of books and pamphlets hotly discussed the trials spread out over more than a year. Banished to the American plantations, the dubious heroine took away a considerable sum collected by her sympathizers, and, thus famed and dowried, she made a good marriage in the colony, where her descendants may now be flourishing as New York bosses or Chicago pork-poisoners.

As hints of what this highway was then, among its bordering of monotonously mean streets stand here and there weather-worn cottages and broad-faced Georgian mansions, whose long windows overlooked John Gilpin's race. When—the name of Enfield at last left behind—about eight miles from the boundary of London, the road has passed out of Middlesex, just before coming to Waltham Cross, on the right it has the gates of Waltham House. This was for years the home of Anthony Trollope, that energetic post-office

inspector, traveller, and fox-hunter, who in his spare time made himself the most voluminous author of a family which must have filled more shelves in the British Museum than any other, his own works better known to our fathers, as they may be to our sons, than they are to a generation greedy of spicier flavours in its literary fare.

A preserve of such good old houses is Baker Street, cotninuing the Green Lanes, which no more resembles that "long unlovely street" of London than its paradise of South African millionaires is like the Park Lane leading on to Tottenham Marshes. This Baker Street makes the pleasantest way north from Enfield, bordered by fine old trees and by the grounds of suburban mansions, more than one of them showing notable ironwork in its gates. A mile of such rustic gentility leads to Forty Hill, where we pass the grounds of Forty Hall, built by Inigo Jones, then those of Middleton Hall, named in honour of Sir Hugh Middleton, cadet of a large Welsh family, who, like so many other gentle youths in his day, became a London apprentice and merchant, and won honour, if not wealth, by his great enterprise of bringing a water-supply to the capital in the New River.

This artificial water-course, a Pactolus to later shareholders though it ruined its constructor, makes more Arcadian appearances in the landscape than does the Lea, and bears itself with an air of long-established standing to belie its "assumption of eternal novity." I know of no other canal that has got a poem all about

it—*The New River*, by William Garbott, whose muse, indeed, flows at no high pressure:

> From *Basons* large, the water is conveyed
> By Pipes, which thence into the *Town* are laid.
> Had I but Skill, how sweetly could I play
> Upon thy *Pipes*, Sir Hugh, a *Roundelay!*

For miles out of London the New River is guarded from pollution like the sky at Naples, which has been said to be the only clean thing there, and that because no one can get at it. But higher up, near the Middlesex boundary, one may take a path along its banks as it winds from mansion to mansion, through woods and meadows where Izaak Walton might still love to linger.

And here we come among royal memories. Between Forty Hall and Middleton House stood Elsynge Hall, or Enfield House, in the New Park, where Elizabeth held her court, after spending some of her younger days at the Old Palace. The Maiden Bridge on the stream crossed by the road continuing Baker Street is taken for the scene of Walter Raleigh's courtier-like offer of his cloak ; no Enfield man, at least, will allow the legend to be located elsewhere. A mile further on, across the county border, we should skirt Theobald's Park—pronounced *Tibbald's*—once the princely seat of Elizabeth's Lord Burleigh, to which James I. took such a fancy that he gave the Salisbury family Hatfield in exchange for it. The park was then ten miles in circuit, the gardens passed for the finest in England,

and the house was a stately palace that stood till George III.'s reign. It had many changes of owner, one, by the irony of fate, being last male descendant of Oliver Cromwell, who carried out a more sweeping exchange with his sovereign. The hunting of Enfield Chase made it a favourite abode with James, and here he died (1625) after nearly being drowned, three years earlier, by a fall from his horse that sent him head foremost into the frozen water of the New River, his boots only sticking up above the ice. Here also the timid King was put in danger from fire as well as water, for White Webbs House, a vanished neighbour of Forty Hall, appears to have been one of the hatching-places of the Gunpowder Plot.

Just within the Middlesex boundary, a road turning left from the well-timbered hamlet of Bull's Cross leads by the modern mansion of White Webbs Wood in its charming park. In a short mile is reached the "King and Tinker," an old inn offering a variety among the zoological signs of the neighbourhood—"Spotted Cow," "Goat," "Fallow Buck," and such-like. This sign gives a local habitation and King James' name to that oft-told tale of a sovereign too familiarly treated by an unsuspecting subject, miller, tanner, tinker, or what not, the first case on record being Alfred's awkward dealings with a baking house-wife. Opposite the inn stands a little chapel of the Countess of Huntington's Connection, which seems a natural growth here, since at Cheshunt, not far off, was the college set up by that denomination, removed to Cambridge only the

other day. Between the chapel and the inn opens a most charming footway across White Webbs Park, coming out in the Clay Hill suburb of Enfield, a little to the east of the "Rose and Crown," that boasts itself the scene of one of Dick Turpin's adventures—his home, indeed, as it was kept by his grandfather.

For straying into Hertfordshire beside Theobald's Park, one can find excuse in a famous Middlesex monument. Let Viator keep straight on from Bull's Cross, till a leafy turn round the north side of the park leads him towards the rose-gardens of Waltham Cross. Here, if he have as many grey hairs as his present guide, he may suddenly start and rub his spectacles, when he comes upon the once-familiar arch of Temple Bar, set in the park enclosure, standing outpost sentry over Greater London, grey and massive as ever, and looking as if in the country air it would outlive that flighty griffin that has taken its place at the City boundary. On the other side of Theobald's might be found a hint of its old neighbour, Charing Cross, for beside the highroad, at the turning off to Waltham Abbey, just outside Middlesex, has been restored a sumptuous Eleanor's Cross, one of that series erected by Edward I. at each spot where his wife's body rested on its way from Grantham to Charing.

Enfield does not turn its best face to the Lea Valley, but the stretch of parks and shady roads to the north of it makes one of the pleasantest corners of Middlesex. And if the pedestrian seek a green ramble back to town, I can put him upon one which will show part of

the country not so much changed from the days of Lamb's wanderings. Let him take the Barnet Road, past the Great Northern Railway station and the spired church, a little beyond which, where the road drops from a turning marked "Chase Ridings," he looks out for a field-path going off to the left. Crossing a brook, it leads him into a bushy lane, past a group of hospital buildings and chimneys that make a landmark. When the suburban skirtings of Eversley Park are reached, turns of the road may be taken to the right, and guide-posts will keep one straight for a mile or so south-west till the north end of Southgate is reached at a joining of five ways. Here, from the road southward for Southgate Green, almost at once a path leads off to the right, by the backs of houses, along a wooded bank, over a meadow, and through a park till it reaches a road dropping down to cross the Pymmes Brook, beyond which is struck the way leading past East Barnet Church to Colney Hatch. A good mile or two to the west of this runs the tram-line of the Great North Road, on the further side of which we now pass to London's north-western artery.

V

ABOUT WATLING STREET

It has been fondly held that Watling Street went out over Hampstead and Hendon, and the bit of the City bearing this name would fit in with such an opinion. But the sounder doctrine seems to be that the ancient way, made or improved as the Romans' great North-Western Road, originally came up from the marshes at Westminster, where the name Horseferry Road tells a tale, and thence took the line of what is now Park Lane, till the building of London Bridge caused it to be diverted into the City. From the Marble Arch this route runs almost straight on to Edgware, and beyond, without much wavering, to the foot of the height on which stands St. Albans.

The Edgware Road is familiar to more Londoners than are aware of its antiquity. It is now too crowded with traffic to stir thoughts of bygone renown ; but on one of the motor-buses that urge their wild career through Maida Vale and Kilburn, beyond Brondesbury making the arduous ascent of Shoot-Up Hill, a spur of the Hampstead heights, we can soon get out to the boundary of London County at Cricklewood. On the

left hand of the road here a square mile or so of new suburb has sprung up in the last few years, the best part of it being on an estate of All Souls' College, whose Fellows must fatten in the body, while less lucky gownsmen are like to starve on agricultural depression. It is well to own property at some "Creek in the Wood" so near London; but when my own three acres of pasturage come to be allotted I have my eye on the fields about St. Martin's or St. Paul's.

The east side of the road here belongs to the Metropolitan borough of Hampstead. On the west we are in the Middlesex urban district of Willesden, that huge hobbledehoy suburb that as yet in part bears much the same relation to London proper as lignite does to coal; or it may be said to be in process of solidification—"half-baked" is a vulgar epithet on censorious tongues. In the lifetime of a generation this district has increased its population more than sevenfold, while, not to be behind its neighbours, it has set up a debt of nearly a million pounds. The large parish originally consisted of several scattered hamlets—Kilburn, Brondesbury, Cricklewood, Willesden Green, Harlesden, and Church End—which have now run together, though with gaps still shrinking every month. The Kilburn end, indeed, has long been firmly welded on to Paddington. Beside Willesden Green Station may be seen a bit of the original green; but if thereon Willesden should affect "county" airs, let her look back to the fate of Lisson Green and Lisson Grove. Between Kensal Rise and the Public

Library in Willesden High Road there is at present a deep, shaded hill lane, barred by a stile, where artists or poets might carry on their business undisturbed. In another year or two this will probably be overflowed from the adjacent brickworks, so as to become "Klondyke Avenue" or "Edward VII. Road." Would that the builder had first swooped upon that dingy south-western edge, blighted by the smoke of engines and the language of bargees, where Browning may well have seen—

> Something on the dismal flat
> Came to arrest my thoughts and change their train!

From the misnamed junction at Harlesden, the quarter of Willesden best known to railway travellers, there are still bits of footpath towards Church End, by Roundwood Park, swelling to an eminence that gives a good view of the neighbourhood. Willesden Church, standing in the remotest corner of the parish, had once a noted image of the Virgin, which brought many pilgrims to "Our Lady of Willesden"; and though it has suffered enlargement and restoration, it enshrines interesting monuments, brasses, and other relics of an antiquity that goes back to Norman times, beset by a show of later tombstones, among them that of Charles Reade the novelist.

The "Crown" at Cricklewood is the terminus of bus traffic on the high-road. Thence an electric tram, coming round from Willesden, spins out the straight road as far as Edgware, through a chequer of open spaces that are every day being filled up like a back-

gammon board. On this road we may well hurry at tramway speed, looking for interest rather to either hand of it. As soon as we get out of what a year or so ago was the edge of building, where on the right stands a forbidding fortress of the Midland Railway, on the other side Dollis Hill Lane is about to be overshadowed by Dollis Hill Avenue. This leafy lane leads along the brow of Dollis Hill to Neasden, passing a house of Lord Aberdeen's, more than once visited by the statesman in honour of whom its sloping grounds, now a public play-place for Willesden, have been named the Gladstone Park. Mark Twain for a time occupied the house, which has a fine view over the north-western suburbs. The word Dollis, recurring in Middlesex place-names, has been held as connected with "dole," an old word for a mark of sharing or partition, replaced in our Prayer Book by "neighbour's landmark"; but this is not a point on which pundits are agreed, and in many cases such names, the popular etymology of which is generally wrong, might turn out to come from an owner long forgotten.

From the back of Dollis Hill a footpath leads down to the "Welsh Harp," the next point of note on the road. This tavern flourishes on the edge of what is the largest lake in Middlesex, or indeed in South-Eastern England, the Kingsbury Reservoir, popularly known as the Welsh Harp Water, a sheet more than a mile long, formed by damming the waters of the Brent and the Silk Brook, as a store for supplying the Regent's Canal. Fishing, boating, and skating make

attractions for customers of the landlord, who in hard winters must coin ice into gold; and in summer there are the tea-garden dissipations of a popular Vauxhall. At the top, the artificial lake's feeders are bridged by the road; at the bottom, the Brent is released from a dam not so large as that of the Nile at Assouan; then below, the once flowery banks of this stream seem as if blighted by the Metropolitan Railway works at Neasden.

Mr. Chadband might well rebuke the writer who should compare the Welsh Harp Water to Loch Katrine or Windermere; but there is some pretty scenery to be looked for about its lower end. One surprising feature here is Kingsbury Church, that, not 300 yards off a suburban road, stands among quiet meadows almost out of sight of any house. On a slight eminence, shaded by funereal evergreens set in a frame of hedgerow timber, its red roof makes a cheerful spot of colour, and the interior shows a refreshingly old-fashioned simplicity. So close to London, one might suppose it a secluded country church, but for the predominance of elegant tombstones betraying its congregation as no mere villagers. The original structure has been claimed as Anglo-Saxon. Some antiquarian spectacles make out here the site of a Roman camp; while there seems better reason to take this *King's burgh* as the first Saxon settlement in Middlesex, in a sense the nucleus of modern London, when the place may have been more populous than it is to-day, but for its *annexe* Neasden. The

village of Kingsbury has drifted nearly a mile to the north, where it lies stranded about its "Green Man," past which a by-way from Harrow leads into the Edgware Road at the hamlet called the Hyde. Hyde House Farm here, a little off the highway, is understood to have given a country retreat to Goldsmith, who is heard of as lodging at other points on the Edgware Road.

The mile or so's breadth of country stretching two or three miles back from the Edgware Road, between Kingsbury and Harrow, makes an extraordinary vacuum in the teeming life of Greater London. For reasons based on a heavy clay soil, it does not lend itself to builders' designs. Of late a few villas have straggled on to the lanes between Kingsbury and its lonely church; else few but scattered farm-buildings break this green expanse, a preserve of real rurality, traversed by lanes and hedgerow paths giving solitary ways across brooks and meadows, northward to Edgware, westward to Harrow, so little trodden that blackberries can grow ripe here within sound of the Metropolitan Railway whistles, and the plainest hint of London's close neighbourhood is a crop of notices to trespassers. On the north side lurk two isolation hospitals; in the centre, towards Harrow, come the hamlets of Preston and Kenton; on the south, at the foot of a bold hill-swell towards Wembley, lie the buildings of Uxendon Farm, where poor Anthony Babington was captured to answer for his abortive conspiracy. Horseflesh seems to thrive on these fat pastures. Though Kingsbury Races have

been well abolished, there are stud paddocks on the Wembley side, as well as great army stables near the Edgware Road; and it was somewhere hereabouts, if one be not mistaken, that Mr. Soapey Sponge came to equip himself for his sporting campaign.

The other side of the Edgware Road is far better populated, for, at the "New" Welsh Harp, above the "Old" one, it touches the growth of Hendon, stretching and straggling across almost to the Finchley Road. Our tram-line passes close to Hendon Station, a mile below the row of old almshouses where one turns aside to the Church of which Hampstead's was once a chapelry. This, with its monuments of dignity, has the air of a true village church, and its shady churchyard overlooks green slopes. Beyond Church End comes a knot of lanes, bordered by new and old houses, one of which belonged to David Garrick. But elsewhere Hendon has grown too much "up to date," and its outskirts are beset by huge piles of public buildings, among them the new newspaper depot of the British Museum Library. In the southern quarter, dropping to the Brent, one might think oneself back in London; while to the north greedy tongues of brick still stretch out over green fields, on which Anthony Trollope's readers may remember how Polly Kneefit was wooed and won.

But there are some pleasant field-walks left about Hendon, and as our tram for the next two or three miles will show us little beside workhouse palaces and the like, the reader may as well be taken on towards

Edgware by a circuitous route across country. About two miles north of the Hendon heights another ridge is crowned by the more eminent features of Mill Hill. For this one may make by two paths starting from Hendon Churchyard, on either side of a line of villas projecting northwards. The field-path on the west side is to be preferred for its open view on the heights of Harrow and Stanmore. After a mile it comes into a road, that bridges the Great Northern Railway branch to Edgware, and presently turns up an avenued way, from the top of which a path mounts over park-like meadows with fine backward prospects, leading into Mill Hill opposite its "King's Head." If here one turned right as far as the "Adam and Eve," beside it one could come back to Hendon by the other path above mentioned, passing near the Great Northern Railway Station, from which a road climbs to Mill Hill's "Angel and Crown." Such a place has to take the consequences of its loftiness in keeping both its valley stations at a distance, a mile or so to the south. Down the northern slope of the ridge lead other pleasant field-ways, that would bring us to Totteridge on the next swell of land, which belongs to that inlet of Hertfordshire crossed by the Great North Road.

This finely situated village straggles roomily along the swarded and shaded ridge road, dropping at the west end into a valley in which lies its Midland station. Where our paths from Hendon come out upon the road, to the left we have the Church, making a very modest appearance in face of a Nonconformist neigh-

bour that turns a conspicuous face to the south. This is Mill Hill School, founded a century ago as a Congregational seminary, and now flourishing as an undenominational public school, which has had among its pupils Judge Talfourd, Lamb's friend, and among its masters Dr. Murray, of the "Oxford Dictionary," an enterprise begun here in the "Scriptorium," that made a treasured shrine till lately destroyed by fire. Older relics are the cedars and other fine trees, some of them said to have been planted by the hands of Linnæus, when these grounds made Collinson's Botanic Garden. The school has now a chapel that would open the eyes of primitive sectaries, and a museum representing the natural history of the neighbourhood.

While this school has thrown off all particularity of austere dissent, Mill Hill bears a banyan-grove of Catholic institutions, which stand prominent about the ridge, St. Vincent's Orphanage to the east, at the other end a Franciscan nunnery with an adjacent industrial school, and behind it St. Joseph's Missionary College, its tower crowned by a conspicuous gilt statue, stamped on the memory of its *alumni* in all parts of the heathen world. The place seems thus to be mostly made up of public buildings, the more so now that barracks have been built at the east end of the ridge; but of late there appear signs of suburban invasion towards the Midland station.

The wanderer in no hurry should by all means keep on to the west end of Mill Hill, and thence mount to Highwood, a height running across to the next ridge,

thus gained most pleasantly when the clay bottom between is well soaked. Highwood itself is a select hamlet, about the gates of three mansions and their grounds. The gardens of the Moat Manor make a sight open on Sundays, and here is another relic of old London, ex-neighbour of Temple Bar, the Hall of Serjeants' Inn, re-erected by the late Serjeant Cox, on the dissolution of the society. Highwood House, where Coventry Patmore lived in his youth, was once the home of Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore and of the Zoological Gardens, who had Samuel Wilberforce for a neighbour. On coming up to a little patch of green before the " Rising Sun," one can turn along by a road of grand old trees hiding these mansions, which presently reaches a stile looking over to the ridge on which Barnet stands, and here forks, the left branch going up to Barnet Gate, the right one running airily along the Totteridge ridge with its mile of village green. Or, a little way beyond the "Rising Sun," one might have taken a lane turning left by the gate of Moat Manor, then presently a field-path to the right, which goes down and up to the road by Barnet Gate, giving off a left fork to reach this road nearer Elstree. So near London it is not easy to find a stretch of country that seems so well to keep its rural innocence wedded to squirely dignity, though, indeed, its squires are now like to have the luck of being Metropolitan brewers or newspaper proprietors.

To get back to Watling Street from Highwood, one takes the road downhill in the other direction, turning

to the right where in doubt till Dean's Brook is passed, beside which a path cuts across towards the station at Edgware. Turns to the left would have fetched Mill Hill Midland Station, whence a path leads to the winding lane that reaches the London end of Edgware through its dependency Hale. From Hendon the shortest line is through Colin Dale, by which, perhaps, came a branch of the ancient way leading over Hampstead Heath.

On the opposite side of the Edgware Road, marked ways go off towards Kingsbury and Harrow. There is not much to say about Red Hill and the last two miles of this road, on which the tram-line stops for the present at the top of the village street, still looking like a real village, with old inns that hint at its importance in coaching days. The original name is said to have been *Edgworth*, transplanted into Ireland by the family of the novelist. On the right turns off the way to the station, beyond the Church, with its ancient tower. The turning to the left, for Stanmore, leads in a few minutes to Whitchurch, where Handel was, or was not, organist for a time ; and in the churchyard is the tomb of William Powell, that Edgware Vulcan whose rhythmic hammerings were understood to have suggested the melody of the "Harmonious Blacksmith" ; but this legend is doubtful. Dr. W. H. Cummings, in his book on Handel, claims to have proved it a fable. This church is notable for the Chandos tombs and the elaborate ornamentation supplied by the prodigal Duke of Chandos, who was Handel's patron

as well as Hogarth's. His seat, Canons Park, still overshadows Whitchurch and the upper end of Edgware with its timber, but it seems about to share the fate of all "eligible building land" so near London.

James Brydges, first Duke of Chandos, held the then profitable office of Paymaster-General under Queen Anne, and out of its perquisites built here what Defoe described as the most magnificent palace in the kingdom, surrounded by gardens and canals that could be equalled only at Wanstead Park, another English Versailles, now a playground of East-End Londoners. The Canons household numbered over a hundred persons, including a guard to make the rounds of the park at night, and musicians for giving that despoiler of the public purse the luxury of a full choral service in his chapel, to accompany a preacher who "never mentioned hell to ears polite." At his dinner in public state each course was proclaimed by a flourish of trumpets. Nor was music the only art he patronized in an outlay which seems to have given Pope a cue for his satirical account of Timon's Villa.

> Lo! what huge heaps of littleness around,
> The whole a laboured quarry above ground.

The Duke was also a butt for Swift's sneering muse. The Dean asserts that he lost by speculation what he had gained by fraud.

> His wings are clipped: he tries no more in vain,
> With bands of fiddlers to extend his train.

After his death the huge construction vanished like a

South Sea bubble, being literally treated as a quarry for less pretentious buildings, no one caring to buy a home that had cost a quarter of a million, while the sumptuous Duke at one time cherished a project for a town palace in Cavendish Square.

As a relic of his expensive ways, the country hereabouts is still seamed with green roads which he constructed for driving himself about; then, it being no one's business to keep them up, they have fallen into a state of picturesque abandonment, not altogether admirable in wet weather. The well-greaved pedestrian would find such a by-way on turning right from the tram-line at the end of the village to a house sentinelled by a spreading tree, where this broad, soft lane goes off on the left. When, after a mile of green solitude, it bends back towards the high road, he can take a path continuing its former direction, which leads over the fields to Edgwarebury, a most sequestered hamlet, reached on wheels by another lane from Edgware. Then beside the first house a grassy track mounts to the ridge road near Elstree, from which one has a wide prospect southwards. This road, leading from Elstree to Barnet, is here the edge of Middlesex.

From Edgware to Elstree the highway mounts for three miles, in about two gaining the top of Brockley Hill, the beauty-spot of the road, as is Highwood of the country to its right and Stanmore Common to its left. Brockley Hill is notable to philanthropists for Miss Wardell's Scarlet Fever Convalescent Home, and to antiquaries as the supposed site of the Roman

Sulloniacæ, while all wayfarers may stop here to admire the view upon the northern heights of London. Else, the main interest of this part of Watling Street is its branches along the north side of Canons Park, then again at Brockley Hill, both for Great Stanmore, that lies about a mile to the left, Little Stanmore being an *alias* of Whitchurch. Hence a footpath wanders across to the larger place, at the crossways outside of which one can turn up a most shady road to come out on the Common, without passing through the village.

Stanmore is a roomy and bowery place, that perhaps owes a certain air of dignified seclusion to the fact of its being reached only by a short branch of the London and North-Western Railway. The first feature that strikes one is the handsome new Church, standing beside the ivied shell of its predecessor, consecrated by Laud, in which some monuments are preserved; but there was an older church that has disappeared. One next observes that Stanmore is uncommonly well off for wealthy inhabitants, to judge by its mansions. The most illustrious of these is Bentley Priory, showing stately on the side of the wooded ridge westward. This, taking its name from an ancient monastery, has had notable owners and visitors. A century ago it was the seat of the Marquis of Abercorn, who entertained here many celebrities, among them Sir Walter Scott while he was revising the proofs of "Marmion." After the death of William IV. Bentley Priory was occupied by Queen Adelaide, and she died here in 1849. For a time it

was turned into an hotel, and when this enterprise did not prosper, the house was taken for his own residence by a well-known hotel proprietor. Stanmore Park, to the south, houses a school ; and a golf-ground stretches below the partly artificial mound of Belmont, looking over to Harrow from its south edge.

On the upper side of the road, mounting beside the grounds of Bentley Priory, spreads Stanmore Common, a fine piece of heath and copsewood, whose knolls and hollows are the highest open ground in Middlesex. When the west end of the Common is left behind by the road, it rises gently to the highest point (503 feet) at the cross-roads, with an " Alpine Coffee House " for hospice. The milestone, some 200 yards ahead, marks the edge of Herts, in which the main road runs on to Bushey and Watford, with turns dropping to Harrow Weald and Pinner, and ways on the other side to Aldenham and Elstree.

At the corner of the Common behind Stanmore Hall, above the village, a path is marked for Elstree, leading down a slope and past a curious obelisk in a circle of trees, which, like the celebrated monument discovered by Mr. Pickwick, bears various interpretations, local legends varying from the tomb of Boadicea to a record of the ending of pursuit after the Battle of Barnet. The red roofs of Elstree soon come in sight, and, to the left of it, the Aldenham Lake, another canal reservoir which plays a fine part in the landscape. Elstree welcomes us into Herts and back to Watling Street, going on greenly to St. Albans, the oldest city

of England, its Roman structures beheld with such wonder by rude Saxon invaders that they attributed it to the *Watling* giants of their mythology: hence the road seems to have taken on this name.

But one might choose rather to turn towards Harrow and the scenes of our next chapter. This we can do delightfully in various ways: by the park-bordered road coming down over Harrow Weald from the highest point of Middlesex; by a beautiful path beginning near Stanmore Church, to wind at the foot of the ridge under the grounds of Bentley Priory; or by a field-way leaving the lowest road to Stanmore on the left, just as it gets out of Edgware, and holding on past Belmont to the green lanes about Kenton. The stranger needs no guidance where the far-seen spire of Harrow makes a beacon.

VI

HARROW AND PINNER

THE road to Harrow is as crooked as the Edgware Road is straight. Through Paddington the former takes puzzling turns, in part forced upon it by the great railway terminus; and only beyond the "Royal Oak" station is its course clearly buoyed by red and yellow omnibuses. Browning lived in this quarter, beside the Regent's Canal, where he found a touch of Venice; but it takes a poet's eye to discover picturesqueness on the first stages of the Harrow Road, as it mounts between Westbourne Park and Maida Vale to a confluence of half a dozen ways at the "Prince of Wales." Now choked by a tramway, it passes Kensal Green, London's largest cemetery, where lie in peace all kinds of celebrities, from princes to authors, beneath a forest of tombstones, spaciously enclosed among streets, chimney stacks, gas-works, railway and canal banks, public houses for the cheering of mutes and mourners—an elaborate contrast to such a country churchyard as might make the weary soul half in love with death.

Thence our road runs on through the town that has grown up about Willesden Junction, which should properly be Harlesden ; but, like Clapham Junction, this labyrinth of bridged platforms has made a wide cast for a name. A mile or two further the road is no better than a street ; and when it at last gets out into fields across the Brent, the shades of building begin to close upon it again beside Wembley Park, its gaps of green soon becoming more and more filled up by the spasmodic growth of Sudbury, which seems uncertain whether it wants to tack itself on to Wembley or to Harrow. To the north is designed for it a new growth styled the Sudbury Model Garden City, whose placarded promises appear in the fields through which the highway turns shirkingly along the side of Harrow Hill. Henceforth known as the Pinner Road, this is the shortest way to the stations at the lower north end of Harrow, and gives off paths to its high quarters. But to them the arduous approach for wheels is by the loop road climbing the ridge at Sudbury Hill.

An opener way on foot towards Harrow is by the Paddington Canal, that, to the left of the road, indulges in most uncanal-like windings, so as to supply an ornament of the landscape. This may be gained beside Wormwood Scrubs, which, overcast by a gloomy prison, seems one of the least attractive parks of London ; nor is the canal bank for a time more pleasant to the eye than to the nose, when one comes in wind of its refuse-destruction stations. But about Alperton it has pretty views of the heights of Ealing and Hanwell

across the sinuous course of the Brent ; then, as it gets below Horsendon Hill, that tiny Alp may be ascended for a prospect over green flats broken by straight railway-lines and by the curves of the canal. The most striking feature here is the cluster of red roofs on the wooded top of Harrow Hill, to which we can hold on by paths and lanes. But if we keep the canal bank, our warning to turn off for Harrow will be the group of idle chimneys at Greenford Green, the monument of a ruined industry—those aniline dyes, introduced by Sir W. H. Perkin, which have gone to be made in Germany.

The pleasantest way to Harrow is on the right of its titular road, by Willesden and Neasden. From the Edgware Road one can turn up Willesden Lane, rising as a lane of gentility, or by its loop, Brondesbury Park, leading past the Manor House, transformed into a girls' boarding-school. This rejoins Willesden Lane where the latter has become the High Road, beyond Willesden Green Station in Walm Lane ; then for a time one must bear with a tram-line and other traffic through the meaner part of the place. But at the sign of "The Case is Altered," leaving the church quarter to the left, a way goes up by the "Spotted Dog" and the Metropolitan Station of Neasden to Neasden Green, here uniting with Dollis Hill Lane along the north side of Gladstone Park. Thence our way on to Harrow is rural—the first mile or so, indeed, being rather commonplace—down to the hollow of the Brent, and up, past the turning for Kingsbury Church, to a

fork of roads at the top of Blackbird Hill. The left branch leads shadily and windingly above Wembley Park, that ambitious attempt at a north-western pleasure palace, whose stumpy Tower of Babel, long at a stick, will now cease to be a landmark and an eyesore. Beside Barn Hill, on the other hand, one bears to the left under the Metropolitan Railway, then over the London and North-Western Railway, skirting the back quarters of Sudbury, and coming into the highroad below Harrow at the well-named One Hundred Elms Farm. But, if the clay soil be not too well soaked, the pedestrian may take most of his way by field-paths through that green interval pointed out under the head of Kingsbury as refreshingly free from suburbification. I have walked across it on a fine summer evening without meeting a human being once I got off the roads.*

* In my guide *Around London*, the main paths over this interval were traced from Harrow, but not outwards, a fault that may be here repaired. The road from Willesden and Neasden forks at the top of its ascent from the Brent. Follow the right branch till it makes a sharp crook, opposite which, over a gate (left), a path mounts the side of a spacious paddock. The stile at the top opens a fine view of the Stanmore and Mill Hill heights, and henceforth the way is most truly rural. Keep the path downwards, which beyond the first hedge turns left over a stile, then, with Harrow Church in view, trends right over a large slope, and wanders into a lane beside a little bridge at Preston. A sign-post opposite shows its continuation to Kenton, crossing two foot-bridges and coming out on the road by a crooked green lane. Across the road, it is continued past Kenton Lodge by a blind by-way, at the turn of which another sign-post points the path on to Edgware. Hence its

So, by one way or other, we come to Harrow Hill, on which stands up the " visible church " of Charles II.'s little joke. This hill, or isolated ridge, not so high as Hampstead, with a slighter topping of sand, wears a trim wig of houses and gardens instead of shaggy heath, and most of it is enclosed. The openest part is about the north end, where the church spire rises so conspicuously looking across the Thames Valley to Eton and Windsor, while over smoky London the Crystal Palace may be seen, or even the tower on Leith Hill. To the eye of faith, a dozen counties lie in view. For enjoying this prospect, there are seats on the terrace outside ; but the consecrated view-point is that tombstone—railed in from relic-stealing admirers, as graves in Thames-side churchyards were fortified against the ghoulism of body-snatchers—on which Byron loved to lie in pensive reverie, and to gaze at the setting sun. From his *Hours of Idleness* it may be gathered

line is almost straight, made plain by stiles and wicket-gates, over a lane, past a group of red-brick hospital buildings and up a slope, from the top of which one sees Whitchurch nestling among the trees of Canons Park, and the more conspicuous tower of Edgware to the right. In the last field, near a little brook crossed by a foot-bridge, this path joins one from Edgware to Harrow, which of course would make a roundabout route from Kingsbury, yet worth taking for its long stretch of green. The direct way for Harrow is to turn left on the lane from the bridge at Preston, going up to crossways marked by a block of buildings that seem to have strayed out of a London street. Opposite this, on the right, a field-path leads to Woodcock Hill, and across the road here, by the north side of the farm, goes on to Harrow, traversing the North-Western and Metropolitan lines near where they intersect each other.

that the discipline of Harrow was looser in that day, when his playfellows seem to have roamed the country somewhat freely and adventurously at risk of "the rustic's musket aimed against my life," getting now and then into mischief, as the young poet confesses :

> Nor shrunk beneath the upstart pedant's frown,
> And all the sable glories of his gown.

Their unlicensed sport of Jack-o'-lantern hunting by night was not put down finally till long after the abolition of the once famous Silver Arrow contest. One feature in Byron's amusements suggests poetic as well as scholastic license—"the streams where we swam" and "shared the produce of the river's spoil." "Ducker" was not yet made ; it could hardly be the Paddington Canal that offered "buoyant billows." "Brent's cool wave," if cleaner then, is a matter of three miles off at Perivale, which, as we learn from prosaic authorities, was the favourite bathing-place of that day. Such smaller streams as trickle about Harrow could yield no better spoil than sticklebacks. The one thing wanting to its prospects is a river like the "hoary Thames," by which rival scholars,

> Full many a sprightly race,
> Disporting on its margin green,
> The paths of pleasure trace.

About this height, shining in Dr. Parr's eyes "with the united glories of Zion and Parnassus," cluster the buildings of a school that stands high among "our public hives of puerile resort." The Church had been

built by Lanfranc, when "Herga" was a manor and seat of the Canterbury Primates. The School was founded under Elizabeth by John Lyon, that public-spirited squireen or yeoman of Preston, at which his house still stands, and he has a memorial in the church among other old brasses and ornaments. The tercentenary of his school came in 1871, when a fund was raised among Harrovians to add the new buildings that throw into shade their old schoolroom, boasting the names of Byron, Peel, Palmerston, and others destined to be carved on our national records. The chapel is rather older, but till two generations ago the boys attended the Parish Church. Scattered around are the boarding-houses that have sprung up about a modest nucleus; then further afield come the playing-grounds, almost as important as schoolrooms in contemporary theories of education.

Harrow has had its ups and downs; but long ago it passed out of the rank of a provincial grammar-school, and it now counts some 600 scholars who, what with work and play, have not much time for lying on tombstones and gazing at sunsets. Under rulers of Liberal sentiments, it came to be looked on as rather the Whig public school; yet, as sign of scholastic conservatism, the costume of the upper boys is still the absurd swallow-tail coat of our great-grandfathers, which produces a most incongruous effect when worn with a straw hat and flannel trousers. The Duke of Genoa, who lived with Matthew Arnold, and had the crown of Spain offered him as still a Harrow school-

boy, was precociously bearded while his rank in the school kept him in short jackets ; then the arbiters of such matters were for granting him the privilege of "charity tails"; but the young Prince is understood to have refused such a distinction till earned by merit.

That pious founder would rub his eyes could he see to what has grown the school he meant, no doubt, mainly for the benefit of his neighbours' boys, though he allowed the entrance of "foreigners," who have ousted the natives. The sons of yeomen and tradesmen are now provided for by a humbler seminary, an inch of the endowment being appropriated to them rather than an ell. But as day-boys are admitted as well as boarders in the masters' houses, families of the better class have been brought to settle here, to the prospering of Harrow, now expanded with a population of over 10,000, spread out in smart streets and lines of villas that run into once outlying hamlets.

Nearly two miles to the north lies Wealdstone, a village that gives a sub-title to Harrow's railway station on the London and North Western Railway. The Metropolitan and Great Central station, distinguished as Harrow-on-the-Hill, comes a mile nearer on the same road, at Greenhill. Now the District Railway has an electric line to Roxeth, on the south side of Harrow Hill. The school authorities appear not much concerned to promote close intercourse with Metropolitan distractions ; and as yet they have been able to play Canute to the trams threatening to advance from Harlesden. Therein they ill follow the example of

John Lyon, who left part of his endowment for improving the roads that, on this heavy clay soil, kept waggons a whole day jolting from Harrow to London.

The meadows round the hill are traversed by footways, some of them, indeed, overlaid by new roads; but there still run many pleasant paths through the fields, and Harrow's learned masters profess to be able to find their way for a dozen miles across country, with few interruptions of macadam. By such paths, eastwards, one can make for the hamlets of Kenton and Preston, and so on to Edgware or Kingsbury over that interval of open country already mentioned. Westwards, over flatter ground, lie the leafy hamlets we shall come to presently from Pinner. Southwards are reached the still genuine villages of Northholt, Greenford, and Yeading, in that "Pure Vale" of our next chapter. Northwards the wooded brow of Harrow Weald makes a contrast of scenery, to which the straight way is by the populous road through Wealdstone and the further village called Harrow Weald, a name representing the slope of forest now trimmed and enclosed as private parks. Through these the road leads up to the "Hare," where to the left opens Harrow Weald Common, and a mile further on the cross-roads at the edge of Bushey Heath mark that highest point of Middlesex we have already reached from Stanmore.

It is a good hour's walk from Harrow Church to its lofty common. Feet impatient of road-tramping can reach it a little more deviously by turning off to the left, nearly a mile beyond Wealdstone, at the "Alma."

This path may seem not very promising at first, but it bends as a bit of road round an enclosure, and ends as a green lane leading up to the road through Hatch End at the foot of the ridge. On the other side of this road, a few paces to the right, opens a narrow path, converging with a better one that goes off through wicket-gates at the corner in the other direction, towards Pinner. This mounts up to a farm and thence to a pretty hamlet bearing the nickname "Harrow Weald City," beside which one gets on to the Common, a broken and roughly-wooded expanse commanding fine views from its knolls and edges. At the west end is the park enclosure of Graeme's Dyke House, the home of Mr. W. S. Gilbert, who here figures as a grave magistrate and substantial squire, but elsewhere has dealt in "magic and spells." The name he spells so is from Grim's Dyke, a very ancient rampart which has been held to mark the limit of Belgic intrusion among Celtic tribes; but the same name belongs to similar works in other parts of England, and the origin of this one seems uncertain. It may be traced as a slight swell in the meadows to the right of a road hence descending to join Oxhey Lane, the way for Watford, across which a path along the Dyke holds on to Pinner.

The highroad from Harrow to Pinner is not very pleasing in its first stage; but here again the pedestrian may turn a little out of his way with advantage. A lane to the right, near the Recreation Ground, brings him up to the Headstone, now a picturesquely moated

farm, once a seat of the Archbishops of Canterbury ; and thence a field-path rambles greenly on to Pinner Church. On the other side of the highroad, one could have taken a path, westward from the cricket field below Harrow Church, to the rifle butts, where it ends as a lane presently crooking north to lead into the shady outskirts of Pinner.

Pinner is a good old village that has taken a vigorous new growth on the stalk of the Metropolitan Railway, rooted in the business quarters of London. It still keeps an air of rustic charm among the sophistications of villadom, and it is ringed about with parks and pretty hamlets—Pinner Green further on the road, Eastcote to the south, Woodridings and Hatch End to the north, connected by crooked lanes and green paths, which, indeed, begin to be too often cut up by builders. Its heart may be marked at the station of the Metropolitan line, which here plays the part of landlord as well as carrier. From the railway and the Pin brook, turns up the main street, showing some old houses, real and artificial, as it mounts to the Church, an ancient one, altered and restored with picturesque effect in its shady nook. In the churchyard stands prominent the ivy-wreathed tomb of William Loudon, a Scotsman, who a century ago had the whim of directing that he should be buried above ground, as he is in this curious structure. It is more than a mile on to the London and North Western station, which, near a lordly pile of Commercial Travellers' schools, marks the north purlieus of the place, whence one can ascend to Harrow Weald

and Bushey Heath by Grim's Dyke or by the path from Hatch End already mentioned.

On this rising ground it is less easy to miss one's way; but I despair of helping my reader not to lose himself in the labyrinth of shady roads, muddy, grassy lanes and bowery paths that lead southwards and westwards from Pinner, through a delightful country, difficult to describe without a repetition of hackneyed epithets. The best I can do is to recommend him to No. 1 of a little series of penny guides published at the booking offices of the Metropolitan Railway, in which he has a selection of these ways traced for him; or he might find the west section of my guide *Around London* of use, like other pathfinders of the kind. But the advice I should give myself, if at leisure on a fine day, would simply be to get lost in a leafy maze dotted with guide-posts to keep one from going far astray, even without the help of map and compass.

One ramble of two or three hours to be suggested is by a chain of old-world villages, such as often surprise one in this populous county, as do quaint, tumbledown cottages here and there preserved like flies in the amber of a spick-and-span suburb. But how long will these hamlets keep their rusticity, now that they are threaded by the Metropolitan branch to Uxbridge, not to speak of the new Great Central and Great Western joint line to Wycombe? Before the foul breath of London has blighted them, let my client, by one of two or three ways, make for Eastcote, a most rustic straggling of cottages a mile or two south-west

By a passage beside the picturesque old "Swan," opposite the Church, there is a way across Ruislip Park, on whose privacy the builder has set seals of doom. This leads into the road for Ickenham, about a mile off, beyond the Great Western Railway station for both villages, each of them having an adjacent "halt" of the Metropolitan line, that begins to sow suburban villas on the fields it has ploughed up, where as yet real cottages bear their crop of ruddy cheeks and hobnailed boots. Ickenham seems a still quieter and quainter hamlet than Ruislip; and its old Church's shingled spire, set among time-weathered tombs, makes a better match with the surroundings than does the baronial pump by the pond opposite. This, like a true country village, lies under the squirely shadow of Swakeleys, the best-preserved seventeenth-century manor-hall left in Middlesex, if Holland House be put out of account. It was built by a city father shortly before the Civil War, soon after which, when in the hands of another Lord Mayor, it came to be visited with due admiration by Mr. Pepys, who saw there one odd sight, the body of a black boy which his master had dried to keep in a box. The only fault the garrulous diarist had to find with the place was as "not very modern in the garden nor house, but the most uniform in all that ever I saw."

Swakeleys may be brought to sight by taking a footpath opposite the parsonage, beyond Ickenham Church, which leads into the park. After crossing several stiles, one can follow the right branch of the path into

the drive, passing along the course of a stream that here forms an artificial sheet of water, across which the mansion shows its mellowed front. On coming out of the park, one finds a rising footway on the left, marked "Uxbridge," which in a mile or so leads to the east end of the town by a road coming over the high ground of Uxbridge Common; or Belmont Road, diverging on the right, would emerge near the west end, passing the Metropolitan Station. Instead of making for Uxbridge from the gate above mentioned, one might turn back by a track through Swakeley Park, giving an excellent view of the mansion from the south-west, well seen also, when the leaves are off, from the lodge on the road between Ickenham and Uxbridge, into which this path leads. A branch of the same road takes one through the Hillingdon Parks to the Uxbridge tram-line, struck a mile or so short of the town, at what is the most Arcadian reach of this rather useful than ornamental highway.

Ruislip and Ickenham may also be gained from Northwood, the next station on the Metropolitan main line, three miles beyond Pinner, where London has again sown a thicket of surburban avenues among patches of wild wood and banks of sand. By the golf-links, to the left of the high-road, a path leads past Ruislip Lake and its woods to an outlying hamlet visited by modest tea-feasters, from which it is a short mile to Ruislip Church; or just beyond Northwood Church, further on, one can take a road to Ickenham or Uxbridge, passing over Duck's Hill, through

reaches of wood, then almost touching the lake at the hamlet above mentioned, where, by its "Six Bells," goes off to the right a path for Harefield. On old maps one observes how large a stretch of this leafy ground is Ruislip Common, and it may be as well not to ask how so much of it came to be enclosed as game preserves and such-like.

On the other side of the Metropolitan Railway at Northwood, the Hertfordshire border is marked by the Oxhey Woods, through which one might ramble on past the secluded Oxhey Chapel, and near the London and North-Western main line as a guide to Watford. The high-road reaches the edge of Middlesex at the top of the ascent beyond Northwood Church, where it comes out on Batchworth Heath, a spacious village green about the gates of Moor Park. Here, from an open height of about 350 feet, there is a view over Harrow Hill upon London and the Surrey hills beyond; and hence, by a right of way across the park, one can walk on to Rickmansworth. But to keep in Middlesex one must turn left from the high-road on to high ground over the valley of the Colne, with the Grand Junction Canal running beside it as the straightest way to Uxbridge.

These are only hints of rambles in this hilly and thickly-wooded north-western corner, which one is tempted to proclaim as the *bouquet* of the county's scenery. But then, one had another opinion when fresh from the parks and meadows of the north-eastern corner beyond Enfield, or from Hampstead

Heath, or from the high ground about Stanmore. Without attempting to adjudge the golden apple among such rivals, let us next turn to a part of Middlesex that can put in no claim to the prize of beauty, although Cobbett *faisait des siennes* in spurning its flats as "all ugly."

VII

THE WESTERN ROADS

On the somewhat flat south-western corner of Middlesex, the most zealous advocate may find it more difficult to call evidence to character than on behalf of its northern heights. Yet cyclists and horses might have a good word to say for this plain, over which three main arteries of traffic run from the west end of London—the Uxbridge road, the Great Western road by Slough, and the South-Western road diverging from the latter at Hounslow. Along these highways let us string the spots of interest and beauty that must be confessed to make oases in a part of the county describable as attending rather strictly to business.

From Shepherd's Bush the Uxbridge road is distinguished by the first long line of electric trams that led out of London to the furthest edge of Middlesex. The Metropolitan boundary is soon crossed as this tram slides into Acton Vale, to the right of which a shabby fragment of Old Oak Common, adjoining Wormwood Scrubs, was once a resort for its mineral wells; and in our own generation a futile attempt was

made at setting up here a popular pleasure ground. It looks for a little as if the road were getting into open country, but soon the streets of Acton undeceive us, stretching on to Ealing. This *Oak Town*, whose first record is as pasture-ground for the Bishop of London's pigs, has had noble and notable residents in its time, Baxter's *Saints' Rest* having been written here, as well as some of Bulwer Lytton's novels. At present it is not an Elysian suburb, even its open spaces being much enclosed as athletic arenas ; but it has two bits of park on either side of the highway, and turning up Horn Lane from the rebuilt Church, one comes on a hollow called the Steyne, that gives some hint what the place was in its village simplicity. The pleasantest part of it seems Acton Green, a mile to the south, bordering the "æsthetic" amenities of Bedford Park.

At the west end of Acton, just before the road reaches Ealing Common, stood Fordhook, Fielding's house, at one time occupied by Byron's widow, that only since the coming of the tram has given place to homes for reformed Tom Joneses and respectable Pamelas of our generation. Among these spick-and-span houses, the name of a brand-new road, Twyford Avenue, invites the pedestrian to a rural digression. At the top of it, what is still a hedged path leads on under the slope of Hangerhill, a park on which golf has laid its privy paw as on so many about London. This path debouches beside the open space enclosed as Park Royal to make a permanent show-ground for the Royal Agricultural Society, an experiment that proved

a failure. Passing to the left, one soon reaches Twyford Abbey on the bank of the Brent, where green slopes and the remains of a fine avenue seem threatened on all sides. To this smallest parish near London a tributary brook gives the name so common among England's double fords. The modern mansion, titled on surmise of an abbey having once stood here, has quite recently deserved its name by passing to a community of foreign monks, whom the whirligig of time brings to seek refuge in our heretical island. These Catholic owners fail to provide a parson for the adjacent extraparochial chapel or miniature church, that does no credit to the Anglican Establishment. For want of a congregation as well as an officiant, Twyford Church stands secluded in silent decay, not yet come to the point of picturesqueness, its windows broken, its graves neglected, the path leading to it choked by weeds. Hence, turning a mile or so westward down the Brent, one reaches another of the many "smallest churches in England," whose name, Perivale, has been interpreted as *Parva;* but in old books it bears more than one *alias*, "Peryfare" and "Purevale."

The Pure Vale seems to have been a title of admiration given to the rich valley south of Harrow—a name which must have had a wider extent than this tiny parish, if Drayton kept within the bounds of poetic license in making the Colne perceive Perivale "pranked up with wreaths of wheat." This whole countryside was long famed for wheat, as it now is for hay; and Fuller says of Perivale, what has also been boasted for

Heston, near Southall, that it had the honour of supplying flour for the King's table. Perivale Church is in very different case from its luckless neighbour, its ancient structure well restored and well cared for; and, while each parishioner of the tiny parish might have a couple of pews to himself, on summer Sundays it seldom lacks an overflowing congregation taking excuse for a stroll from Ealing. Ealing, indeed, grows towards it across a green flat, on which the Brent makes sinuous windings as natural hazards for a golf-course.

One might hence follow the river on a byroad, circumventing the tram-line through Ealing and Hanwell, two adjacent places as to which the story is told of Thackeray's—or who was it ?—suggestion to the railway authorities that the porters should be changed who proclaimed them as *H*ealing and 'Anwell. Ealing is such a favourite residential suburb that it now extends for two miles along the road, and on either side has turned private grounds and mansions into streets and playgrounds. On the right rises the dignified quarter of Castlebar Hill, over which are ways to the new park on the Brent ; on the left lies Ealing Common, then, further on, Walpole Park, with its fine old timber, thrown open since the death of Miss Perceval, sister of the murdered Prime Minister, who survived to the beginning of this century as a link with days when Ealing was a Middlesex village, not yet a cantonment of Anglo-Indians and the like. It is not so overbuilt but that patches of green and pleasant footways are still found about a place which can boast to be the

birthplace of Huxley and the burial-place of John Horne Tooke. A noted private school here had in its day such pupils, destined to varied fame, as Charles Knight, Thackeray, Newman, and the Lawrence brothers. Bulwer Lytton also was pupil of a clergyman, with whom he seems to have got on less ill than with most of his instructors. In the upper part of Ealing, near its conspicuous water-tower, stands the Princess Helena College, which has made its mark in the new education of girls; and there are other flourishing schools that now may be rearing the philosophers, novelists, and statesmen of the next generation.

We need not ask too closely where Hanwell begins, this suburb being a little shy of its name, shadowed by a huge County Lunatic Asylum, which really belongs to the more idyllic parish of Norwood, to the south. Perhaps the cemeteries on either side of the high-road may be taken as the junction-point, and we are certainly in Hanwell when the tram-road makes an abrupt drop to cross the valley of the Brent. A little way below, the river becomes merged with the Grand Junction Canal, descending at the back of the Asylum by a chain of locks which recall those of Trollhatta or Banavie on a small scale, beside what seems a miniature edition of the Great Wall of China. Walking to Brentford on the tow-path for a couple of miles, one might fancy oneself in the heart of a rather common-place country, where straggling curls of the tamed river show scum almost as green as its banks; but the solitude is disturbed by a tram-line close at hand.

If that by-way is not very attractive, up the Brent one can turn through one of the prettiest bits of Izaac Waltondom so near London. The ground on this side is laid out as a park below the tall viaduct of the Great Western Railway, whose passengers have such a good view of the isolated Church. Behind the church starts a path making a chord to the vagrant bends of the Brent, till the stream turns eastwards beside a road towards Perivale. Across this road the path holds on to the old Church of Greenford, that has some notable relics under its shingled spire and tiled roof, showing through a clump of trees which help the green meadows to bear out the name of the village. The road through Greenford goes on to Harrow by Greenford Green, whose name does not so well answer to its promise of rusticity. But over the fields beside Greenford Church one may take a mile of footpath leading across the canal to Northholt, *alias* Northall, another of those real, quaint, roomy villages that surprise one in out-of-the-way nooks about London, saved from the builder, perhaps, by a heavy clay soil that makes bricks to deface less secluded parishes. As unspoiled as the village seems its weather-worn little Church, standing on a knoll beside the broad sward of roads knotting themselves together here. Northwards one finds a charming path that, ending as a green lane, leads almost into the south suburbs of Harrow. In the other direction the canal bank would bring us back to the road at Southall.

There was a Southholt once, which, corrupted by the

evil communications of the high-road, has changed its name as well as its nature. I can remember Southall when it could still be called a pleasant country nook, half village, half distant suburb; but in one generation it has waxed to what it is now, a somewhat commonplace outgrowth of London, which for a time was the tram terminus. It has a weekly cattle market as its most bucolic feature; and there are still some pleasant fields to be found on either side. And that is all to be said about Southall, unless that beside it unite the two branches of the Grand Junction Canal, hence running on straight to West Drayton, where it turns north up the valley of the Colne.

Across the Paddington arm of the canal the high-road comes upon veritable turnip-fields, as it goes on to Uxbridge, passing the hamlets of Hayes, a scattered village whose manor-house made one of the Archbishops of Canterbury's many seats, the dignity of which seems to survive in the spacious parsonage. The fine restored Church contains some old monuments, notably, beside the altar, Sir Edward Fenner's tomb with coloured effigy; it has also a much-faded wall painting of St. Christopher in the north aisle, and a discarded altar-piece representing the "Adoration of the Magi."

Hayes Town, as the church precinct styles itself, lies to the left of the way, down a turning opposite the "Adam and Eve." On the right the Yeading brook waters a stretch where itself seems the pleasantest feature. Here comes another of those odd blanks in the map of

Middlesex

Middlesex, a flat of sodden green, looking at home when wrapped in a November mist, through which loom snug farmhouses, but it is else so unpopulated that only one road runs across it, by Yeading to Ruislip and Ickenham. Bold explorers, perhaps, might here find a touch of adventure in trespassing against notices which block approach to that devious brook, over a country of such agricultural note that it is not to be sneezed at unless by sufferers from hay fever. The Yeading Brook, further down promoted to the title of the Crane River, should have observance as the largest stream belonging entirely to Middlesex. It rises in two forks on the slopes about Harrow, and after flowing right across the county, has two mouths into the Thames, one of them with the by-name of the Isleworth River.

As the tram approaches Uxbridge, the scenery on the right improves in the swelling parks of Hillingdon, through which leafy lanes and paths wind over to Swakeleys and Ickenham. This, indeed, is one of the pleasantest square miles in Middlesex, filled up with the grounds and gardens of goodly mansions ; and the golfers, upon whom one of its slopes seems wasted, have a better chance of attending to their game on less comely enclosures passed further back. Should any pedestrian doubt my word for it, let him turn up to the right opposite Hillingdon Church, by the "Vine," following this by-way as far as the lodge gate of Hillingdon House on the left, just beyond which he may take a path through the park, to be brought back to the highroad as it enters Uxbridge, with little devia-

tion from his straight way. But, first, he would do well to stop at Hillingdon Church, a spaciously handsome one, containing brasses and monuments, conspicuous among them the Onslow and Paget tombs on either side of the altar. In the churchyard is the tomb of Rich, the celebrated harlequin and lessee of Covent Garden.

Hillingdon was the mother church of Uxbridge, whose long main street is sentinelled, a mile further on, by the tall modern spire of St. Andrew's ; then, further along, the older Parish Church stands hidden behind the Market Hall, so closely squeezed into the same block of building that there is no room for a chancel. This border borough, thriving on corn-mills and other industries, has more the look of an independent market town than any in Middlesex. Till lately a certain awkwardness of communications kept Uxbridge rather out of the way, served only by a branch from the Great Western Railway at West Drayton, as it once was by slow canal-boats ; but now it has a Metropolitan line from Harrow, besides the electric tram that runs through it to the top of the descent by which the road falls to cross the Colne. The meaning of the name has been matter of controversy, but probably this bridge was christened from the Celtic word for water that appears in *usk*, *esk*, *axe*, *uisk*, *whiskey*, and other forms.

Uxbridge has a population of some 9,000, its thickly inhabited outskirts left out of account. The chief event in its history is the meeting here in 1645 of

Commissioners appointed by Charles I. and the Parliament to negotiate terms of peace. The mansion in which their fruitless deliberations were held has been much altered, and is now an inn, but it still proudly exhibits itself as the "Treaty House" by the road at the west end of the town, and part of the interior is preserved in its old dignity. The sign of this inn was an inheritance from the "Crown," at which the King's Commissioners lodged, those of the Parliament finding quarters at the "George," further back in the chief street. Beyond the "Treaty House," first crossing the canal by a very Piscatorish-looking tavern and a large mill, we pass the Colne into Buckinghamshire.

The finest scenery about Uxbridge comes over the river in the county on which we must here turn our backs. Good Pisgah views of it can be had from the high ground of Uxbridge Common to the north of the town, by which goes out an airy road towards Rickmansworth, with branches for the quiet villages we visited from Pinner. Southwards the road by the river and the canal is not so pleasant, populated by various industries about Cowley, in whose churchyard was buried Dr. Dodd, the divine hanged for forgery, 1777. But opener and more agreeable country is reached at West Drayton, where, having passed its scattered hamlets on the canal, we find houses not so thick as good old trees about its green, and picturesque nooks by the branching swirls of the Colne. From the Church, enclosed in a park to the left, a fine avenue leads southwards, ending in paths and lanes that, by the

villages of Harmondsworth or Harlington, make pleasant ways into the central western highway.

This, once renowned as the Bath Road, begins for Londoners with Piccadilly, leading by the south side of the Park to Kensington, Hammersmith, then by Chiswick, Turnham Green, and Gunnersbury to the busy end of Kew Bridge, lately rebuilt. Beyond, it enters the main street of Brentford, so narrow that one calls out at finding this thoroughfare choked with a tram-line, as it once was with flying Roundheads in a hot fight of the Civil War.

Brentford is styled the county town of Middlesex, but has little honour in its own country; and if its two fabulous kings were content to sit here on one throne, the County Council prefers a more dignified seat at Westminster. Like Washington or Ottawa, indeed, it seems to be an artificial capital, originally having no rank but as dependency of the adjoining parishes of Ealing and Hanwell. This dirty place, besides bearing an old bad name for bear-baitings, election riots, and the like disorders, has been a butt for metropolitan poets ever since Falstaff was disguised and drubbed as the fat witch of Brentford. The author of the *Rehearsal* made it the scene for his burlesque. Johnson satirically coupled its name with Glasgow, in which he showed his ignorance, as all travellers of that century insist on the neatness and prettiness of the Clyde city before its days of grimy wealth. Thomson, in his *Castle of Indolence*, takes this "town of mud" to be a fit stage for pig-driving,

where motor-cars now "gruntle to each other's moan"; Goldsmith unkindly suggests it as goal for a race between "a turnip-cart, a dust-cart, and a dung-cart"; and other contemporary bards affect the same nose-holding attitude towards poor Brentford, their complaints, as a certain guide-book dryly says, being in our day echoed by sanitary inspectors. Of late the squalid county seat shows grace to be somewhat ashamed of itself, and has a scheme in view for sweeping and garnishing. Let us hurry through its show of gas-works, chimney-stacks, dingy wharves and slums about the mouth of the Brent, only noticing that at the Church and the Town Hall, near the bridge, the place attains a certain point of quaint ugliness not without attraction, and that its squalid waterside features set in relief the blooming of Kew Gardens across the Thames. There are some pleasanter aspects to the right, where, by Old Brentford and Boston House, the town begins to merge with the spreading outskirts of Ealing; but as to New Brentford, as it once was, its motto should be *Guarda e passa.*

When the road has crossed the Brent it passes, on the left side, the noble demesne of Syon House, which the tram-traveller might flit by unawares but for an ornate gate revealing the grounds. From a right-of-way crossing the park to Isleworth Church on the river bank, can be had a fuller view of the mansion, crowned by that lion so long familiar to Londoners over Northumberland House, there said, on some such authority as that local worthy, the late Mr. Joe Miller's,

to wag its tail whenever it heard noon struck at Westminster. This stately structure, rebuilt by the Adams, had been a rich nunnery "conveyed" to the Lord Protector Somerset, and is now a seat of the Dukes of Northumberland. The community of nuns long held out at Lisbon, keeping the keys of their English home; but when, a century ago, they showed them to the Duke of that day, he is understood to have bluntly remarked that the locks had been altered. Another treasure of these nuns has been brought back to their native country—the famous Syon Cope, an elaborate specimen of mediæval embroidery now preserved at South Kensington Museum.

On the other side of the road one may turn up to the Earl of Jersey's Osterley Park, first enclosed by Sir Thomas Gresham of City renown, the house rebuilt for Childs the bankers. The park extends over a well timbered and watered flat which Horace Walpole called the ugliest in the world; but that in our day seems a slander. By a road through it, or round its precinct, one can reach the villages of Norwood Green and Heston, where Middlesex does not want its common beauty of groves and gardens. This would be a cyclist's or pedestrian's pleasantest way on to beyond Hounslow, for the highroad, skirting Isleworth, has not much to say for itself.

Nor is there much to be said for Hounslow when we get there—a long, unlovely town, its brightest spots of colour the uniforms of soldiers quartered at its barracks or in a camp beside the Crane. Hounslow

Heath has been used for many camps, and it had once an ill name as headquarters of knights of the road, whose prowess made the journey to Bath an adventure; but there is little trace of its wildness now. It seems to be all enclosed, except the plain to the left occupied by that permanent camp, with its fortification of barbed wire. This was the scene of an interesting experiment made in training a company of young soldiers, at the expense of the *Spectator* and its readers. Besides the preparation of food for powder, another industry of the neighbourhood is the powder-mills to be found along the course of the Crane, locally known as the Powder Mill River; but they are naturally of a retiring disposition.

In the long street of Hounslow the road forks at a spot once grimly marked by the gibbets of highwaymen. The right branch is the Bath Road, soon passing an inn which proclaims itself the half-way house between London and Windsor, and in two miles crossing the Crane to Cranford. This is not the Cranford of Mrs. Gaskell's delightful story, but a very pleasant village in its way, perhaps the prettiest place on the road, which had Thomas Fuller for rector—that learned, loyal, and humorous divine who, as the inscription on his tomb recorded in his own vein of wit, sought after immortality while immortalizing the worthies of England. The Church, with its monuments, is enclosed in the park of Cranford House, where once stood a Templar preceptory that became a seat of the Berkeleys, whose old nobility flared into a Georgian scandal now

growing dim. Thus the autobiographical sportsman, Granville Berkeley, came to be partly brought up here, and has many tales to tell of highwaymen adventures, including that legend of a Bishop who took to the road and was "taken ill" on Hounslow Heath, being fatally shot through the body. This master of hounds could remember the county as dotted with heaths—Harlington Common, Hillingdon Heath, and others—which at one time stretched almost continuously down to the Thames, and across it seemed to piece together the evil repute of Hounslow and Bagshot. But he lived to lament how "corn-fields have sprung up in lieu of furze-bushes; villas have filled the swampy gravel-pits where, as a boy, I have shot snipes; and blooming gardens have banished the bullrushes"; nor will the *Spectator's* young warriors now make havoc among the plovers' eggs, which used to be noted spoil on Hounslow Heath.

Another notability of the neighbourhood was Lord Bolingbroke, Pope's "noble St. John," of whose seat, Dawley Court, the name at least is preserved near Harlington Church. A little off the high-road, to the right, are the villages of Harlington, and Harmondsworth or Harmsworth, both with interesting old churches, and the latter boasting the largest church-barn in England. Between them lie the woods of Sipson. On the other side, opposite the by-road from Harlington, could once be traced the outlines of a Roman camp, one of the many connected with Cæsar's name. Then at Longford is reached the Colne, here-

about, on the flat edge of Middlesex, splitting itself into tame branches, harnessed to industry. Two of these are artificial, one known as the Duke of Northumberland's River, the other as the Queen's, the Cardinal's, or sometimes as the Longford River, formed by Wolsey to supply the waters of Hampton Court. Down the stream keeping the main name, one can find lanes and footpaths by Stanwell, Runnymede rifle-range, and Staines Moor to the Thames at Staines; and in favour of this walk it may at least be said that it implies no hill-climbing. On the Slough road we must hold on as far as Colnbrook to get out of Middlesex.

The straight road to Staines is of course by the great south-western highway that forked to the left in Hounslow, keeping parallel to the South-Western Railway, through a country much given up once to commons, now to market gardens, which have the name of nursing a not idyllic class of labourers. The chief places on the railway are Feltham and Ashford, between which appears to astonished passengers the rigging of a ship on dry land, planted here to instruct the boys of a large industrial school; and other institutions help to swell the population of this vicinity. On the road the most notable spot is Bedfont, its ancient Church enshrining curious frescoes apparently of Stephen's reign, the churchyard famed for two yews trimmed into the likeness of peacocks, in which a wholesome legend, as interpreted by Tom Hood, sees two sisters thus transformed as punishment for their vanity.

> And where two haughty maidens used to be
> In pride of place, where plumy death had trod,
> Trailing their gorgeous velvets wantonly,
> Most unmeet pall, over the holy sod,
> There, gentle stranger, thou mayst only see
> Two sombre peacocks.

Another interesting church, with an elaborate Knyvett monument, is in the pretty village of Stanwell close by, where the spire stands not quite straight, about a mile to the right of the highroad. Bedfont is understood to have been the old limit of Windsor Park; and the neighbourhood has still some fine trees, as well as market-gardens; but the straight road's best prospect shows ahead in the Cooper's Hill ridge on the edge of Surrey, which it enters by the bridge at Staines.

This border town of three counties may be more pleasantly reached by the Thames, to whose devious curves the road makes a chord often travelled by Cobbett on the way to his beloved Surrey and Hampshire; then its scenery might shape his slander of Middlesex as "all ugly," while his detestation of commons provoked him to call Hounslow Heath "a sample of all that is bad in soil and villainous in look," yet "only a little worse than the general run." It would be the shrinking heaths rather than the spreading fields that moved him to such sweeping condemnation; and if his burly ghost still jogs along the Staines road, it might want nothing but a few acres of "Cobbett's corn" to take this part of Middlesex for an earthy paradise.

VIII

THE THAMES BANK

We come now to the south-western corner of Middlesex, presenting a thick fringe of beauty and interest along the crooked course of the Thames. The beauty, indeed, is mainly artificial, the ground being in general flat, traversed by sluggish streams, and often apt to revert to the condition of a flooded marsh till banked in by dykes of habitation and ornamentation that make most of this river-edge one line of garden suburb. When we abuse London for defiling the country, let us not forget how plain-featured country may be disguised and pranked out under the fancy-dress of parks, gardens, pleasure-grounds and playgrounds, to be reckoned among the manufactures of a great city. Here, indeed, a champaign face of nature smiles rather for Pope and Bolingbroke than for Wordsworth and Tennyson.

We have already touched the Thames at Brentford, and since inner London ended with Hammersmith, something might have been said of the green tongue of Chiswick and the quaint village of Strand-on-the-

Green, below Kew Bridge, only in part overlaid by an extension of suburban Gunnersbury. Then above Syon Park and Isleworth Church, at one mouth of the Crane, the villas of St. Margaret's make a transpontine dependency of Richmond, almost joined also to the spread of Twickenham. At this latter town I take up my tale of the riverside.

Twickenham has been growing so fast along its tram-lines that it seems in danger of becoming a commonplace extension of London; but it cannot forget days of dignity when Queens, Princes, and poets were at home here. Katherine of Aragon, Katherine Parr, and Katherine of Braganza are supposed to have occupied the manor-house that once stood beside the Church, where lie buried Pope, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Kitty Clive the actress, and Admiral Byron, that "Foul-weather Jack" whose story of the *Wager's* wreck gave so many hints to his grandson's verse. Queen Anne, whose death is such a well-authenticated fact in history, was born at Twickenham, as was her sister Queen Mary. The only one of Anne's seventeen children that struggled on to any prospect of surviving her, the poor little Duke of Gloucester, was brought from Kensington to Twickenham, as to the seaside, for change of air after an illness. In the next century, Horace Walpole speaks of the place as the "Baiae of Great Britain," and quotes someone as declaring that "we have more coaches here than in half France." Among Pope's noble neighbours was the traveller of epistolary renown, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu,

whose friendship with the poet went so sour in the end. Some of the fine cedars hereabouts are said to have been raised from cones sent by her from the East. Another householder of rank was that Lord Ferrers, hanged for murder, according to the legend, in a silk rope, driven to the gallows in his own coach and six, which nowadays would probably have taken the road to Broadmoor Asylum. Writers whose works are now in every gentleman's library, but not in Mudie's, such as Richard Owen Cambridge, who seemed to his contemporaries a universal genius, and that other poet whose fortune was to be "born a Whitehead and baptized a Paul," could once be counted among the notabilities of a place which, under the shadow of Pope's renown, has housed more enduring names, from Fielding to Dickens. But for the long list of its celebrities and associations, the reader must be referred to such local chronicles as R. S. Cobbett's *Memorials of Twickenham.*

Some of the houses thus celebrated still stand, or their names at least are preserved. Twickenham Park, at the Richmond Bridge end, a seat of Lord Bacon, has given place to humbler homes. But Marble Hill, built for the Countess of Suffolk, George II.'s mistress, and at one time the home of Mrs. Fitzherbert, another George's left-handed wife, has been saved from the jerry-builder to become a public pleasure-ground, that will not debase the view from Richmond Hill. This house is haunted by the shades of Pope, Swift, and Gay, as its neighbour by more

TEAS

recent memories of princely exiles. Orleans House was so renamed as making an asylum for Louis Philippe, escaped from the storm of the Revolution which Madame de Genlis had taught him to hail with youthful enthusiasm. Half a century later, after his second banishment, this mansion again gave refuge to the Orleans family ; then for a time it was turned into a club. Members of the same family have more than once occupied the adjacent York House, whose earliest dignity was as home of Lord Clarendon, by him given to his son-in-law, James II. ; and so it came to be the birthplace of two English Queens. It has now been bought from the Duke of Orleans by a Parsee gentleman, son of the late Mr. Tata of Bombay, that millionaire of princely public spirit who lies buried in the next county.

This connection with our Eastern Empire is not altogether a new one for York House. A visitor here in his day was the Brahmin reformer Rammohun Roy, founder of the Brahmo-Somaj church, who is said to have designed writing a philosophical dialogue with the scene laid on the terrace of York House. For a good many years towards the end of the century it was occupied by Sir Mountstuart Grant-Duff, ex-Governor of Madras, as will be remembered by all readers of the later extracts from his Diaries, published in more than a dozen volumes. These volumes, abridged as they are, have been criticized as too voluminous ; but they make excellent reading for judicious skippers, and after a century or two, one can imagine a further abridgment

being treasured like Evelyn's Diary or Horace Walpole's Letters. This diarist was a keen amateur of good company and of good stories, which stud his pages like plums in a pudding of political suet and botanical crumbs. His anecdotes were collected from all quarters, even from the steps of the throne. There is one, for instance, of a South African millionaire, whose accent led to him being addressed in German by a very eminent personage: "*Sind Sie Baier?*" "Not at present prices, your Majesty!" stammered the confused courtier. In the same volume we are told how a whist player held thirteen trumps, yet did not win a trick, for it was in the far West, and his partner shot him dead as remonstrance against the trumping of his own ace.

But one must not deck one's pages with plumes borrowed from a writer whom I met as fellow-member of two among his many clubs. I can recall a wet afternoon we killed together shortly before his death, when, to cheer what seemed a fit of depression, I told him all the stories I could think of as likely to stir his sense of humour. Only afterwards did it occur to me, in a flash of *esprit d'escalier*, that I had been drawing on one of his own lately published volumes; and I shall never know, on this side of Jordan, whether it were out of courtesy or obliviousness that the old gentleman let himself appear to be amused. With one maiden anecdote, however, now for the first time blushing in print, I had been able to tickle him exceedingly, as it dealt with a colonial governor, a kind of personage

bulking as largely in his interest as a schoolmaster did for Parson Adams. In the suite of such a temporary potentate served an officer, whose wife told me how at home, years later, making a third-class railway journey, they had brought considerations to bear upon the guard that they should have the compartment to themselves. But at one station he came to explain : "Very sorry—train crowded—must put someone in with you —but I have picked out a respectable couple—quite decent people ; you won't mind them "—with which apology were bundled in the very decent couple my friends had last seen viceregally enthroned in a distant clime. So much for the transitoriness of official glory!

A tale which Grant-Duff might not have thought worth recording has been told of Mr. Labouchere, but an older date is ascribed to it : that an Englishman travelling in Germany, called upon to declare his *Stand*, could describe himself by no other title than "Elector of Middlesex," then was astonished to be received with honours due to a prince. Mr. Labouchere comes to mind here as for a time occupying Pope's Villa, of which the name survives, but little else, among the riverside mansions at the further end of Twickenham. It stands above Eel-pie Island, a leafy atoll of the Thames, that makes a screen or barrier-reef for this town, and has at its lower end a ferry not unknown to song.

Pope's nearest neighbour here was Lord Radnor, whose grounds are now turned to public enjoyment A little further on stands back from the river the park of Strawberry Hill, where Horace Walpole's "piecrust

battlements" succeeded Pope's Villa as lion of the place. The once famous collection of curiosities, after being dispersed, was in part regathered into the present mansion, enlarged and improved from that "Strawberry Hill Gothic" structure that became a proverb, not to say a by-word, with more tasteful architects. The nucleus of it was "a little plaything house," which its dilettante owner, on removing there from his "tub at Windsor," described as "the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with filigree hedges. . . . Richmond Hill and Ham Walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames is between me and the Duchess of Queensberry. Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind. . . . Lord John Sackville predeceased me here, and instituted certain games called *cricketalia*, which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow." Still, of a summer evening, such mysteries are celebrated on the lordly expanse of Twickenham Green; but if this self-satisfied letter-writer's ghost could come skimming under what were once his own windows, Father Noah might find it no harder to be at home in a toyshop ark than Walpole to recognize the "romance in lath and plaster" that was his much-advertised work of half a century.

Behind Twickenham, amid more rural surroundings, stands, in a transformed state, the mansion of Sir God-

frey Kneller the painter, which came to be a training-school for teachers, with the late Archbishop Temple for one of its principals, but is now the home of another muse as an academy for army bandsmen, whose performances are open to the public once a week. Kneller Hall was originally Whitton House, and not far off, on the south edge of Hounslow, survives the name of Whitton Park, where bagpipes should once have been practised; for, in the early part of the eighteenth century, it was a seat of the Duke of Argyll who in its grounds did so much towards introducing alien trees, to become naturalized citizens of our groves and gardens. This was the Duke who served with distinction under Marlborough and as victor over the Old Pretender's forces in 1715; while he may be best remembered as patron of "Jeanie Deans."

In the famous view beheld by that heroine from Richmond Hill, Twickenham is seen imperceptibly merging into Teddington, a parish of less fame, but it, too, has had notable inhabitants, from William Penn the Quaker to Peg Woffington the actress; and R. D. Blackmore, the novelist of our own time, practised the moral of Candide in a market-garden here. Both Upper and Lower Teddington are well populated now, the latter best known to Londoners for the first full lock on Thames tide-water, the former as an approach to Bushey Park. This is a royal demesne of over 1,000 acres, public access to which was secured by a local Hampden, Timothy Bennett, shoemaker, who in the eighteenth century fought the question of

right of way at his own expense, then, in 1900, was rewarded by a curious memorial set up at one of the entrances to the park. The last royal personage who lived here was William IV., as Duke of Clarence ; and one of the last acts of Queen Victoria was granting Bushey House to be a National Physical Laboratory. The park is now practically a public one, where a Sunday in May draws throngs of Londoners to admire the flowering of the chestnuts on its renowned avenue. But " when the high midsummer pomps are on," too, and in the glories of autumn decay, and, indeed, at all seasons, Bushey, with its fine timber, its stretches of bracken, its ponds, and its herds of tame deer, makes a sight that no visitor to London should miss. The main avenue, a straight and broad mile, leads from Teddington to Hampton Court, on the other side approached from Kingston Bridge through the glades of Hampton Park, to which one could come round by the river and the villas of Hampton Wick.

The history of this palace is, of course, familiar to every British schoolboy ; but in case any of my readers should be more at home in Versailles or the Vatican, I will treat them as M. Jourdain desired of his master. Hampton Court was built by Cardinal Wolsey at the height of his power and pride, that would have cast into shade the magnificence of Canons Park, the household of the butcher's son being nearly ten times as numerous as that of Queen Anne's Paymaster-General. Extensive as his building was, Wolsey appears not to have completed its full design when his power became

endangered by the conflagration lit at Anne Boleyn's eyes. He hoped to avert Henry's wrath by presenting that too ambitious home to the King, who, in Diomedean exchange, gave him the manor of Richmond, where soon there were harder dealings between *Ego* and *Rex meus*. Henry pulled about the Cardinal's architecture in his own high-handed style, building the present hall and chapel; and he made Hampton a hunting-palace, with several parishes around as preserves. Edward VI. was born and partly brought up here. Here, too, Mary spent her dark honeymoon—that unloved sovereign whose faults have been excused by a schoolgirl on the plea of a temper soured under too many stepmothers. Hampton was a favourite residence with Elizabeth also, and with James, who held at it his famous conference of divines, from which came our present translation of the Bible. Charles I. was much at home at Hampton, and so in turn was Cromwell—a fact which may have caused the mental confusion of that schoolboy quotation of him as exclaiming, "Had I but served my God as I have served my King!" Charles II. and his brother are found now and then at Hampton, to which William took a special fancy, so that he had it restored and enlarged by Wren, to be a home reminding him of Holland by its canals and gardens; and he met his fatal fall from horseback in the park. Queen Anne's sickly son, above mentioned, was born at the palace, where the poet remarks how—

"Thou, great Anna, whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes tea."

The Georges seem rather to have neglected Hampton Court, which in the last century or so occasionally housed royal guests, but has become mainly a sort of aristocratic almshouse, the apartments being granted to widows of distinguished public servants or ladies better born than endowed. The inmates of these dignified quarters are liable to be disturbed by the clatter of the adjacent barracks, by an uncertain ghost of one or other of Henry's wives, that does not fail to haunt here, and most of all, perhaps, by the sightseers, who on holidays throng the quiet courts, the galleries with their thousand pictures, the hall with its tapestries, the gardens with their gigantic vine, the Long Walk by the river, the banks of the Long Water in Hampton Park, and the Maze near the Lion Gate, outside of which the palace is separated from Bushey Park by a fair-ground of refreshment houses.

The station for Hampton Court is at Molesey, on the Surrey side of the river, here making a string of shady islets and creeks well known to boating parties. The tramways from London come to Hampton Green, such a spacious and well-shaded area as beseems its royal neighbourhood. Along this, or through the south-west corner of Bushey Park, one can pass on to the village of Hampton, which touches the river at its rebuilt Church; but the banks are much blocked by private residences, and soon disfigured by huge water reservoirs. The most famous house here is Garrick's villa, that seems to have been designed as an understudy of Pope's. Besides this noble retreat, Garrick had a

town-house at the Adelphi, and was lord of Hendon Manor ; few actors have managed to be so prudent, so prosperous, and so well off for "the things that make death terrible," as was Johnson's comment on his old pupil's display. Sir Christopher Wren retired to a home on Hampton Green, about which there remain several houses and gardens where wigs and ruffles would look hardly out of place. New Hampton, to the north, is more commonplace, where Hampton's railway-station, on the Shepperton branch, stands half an hour's walk from the palace. About as far to the north of this line is Hanworth, traversed by the artificial Queen's or Cardinal's River formerly mentioned, and once distinguished by a Tudor hunting-lodge which became the home of Henry VIII.'s lucky widow.

By its Thames Street, Hampton straggles on towards Sunbury, where the river is broken by eyots, weirs, and a deep shady cut on the Surrey side. This village, too, contains good old-fashioned houses as well as new ones, stretching back from its Church on the bank to the station a mile behind, where another royal residence is believed to have stood in Kempton Park, now degraded into a race-course. Close to Sunbury is Upper Halliford, by which a road takes a straighter line into the neighbouring parish of Shepperton, cutting across a bend of the river opposite Walton-on-Thames. Shepperton is a more scattered place, containing several hamlets and strings of villas connected by roads that seldom want the true Middlesex wealth of hedgerow timber.

Here at last we seem to be getting into open country, and away from riverside villas. A summer encampment at the end of Walton Bridge left out of account, the next place reached on the river is the pretty group of houses and inns called Lower Halliford, a little above the bridge. This ford makes the scene of a hot antiquarian controversy as to whether or no Cæsar here crossed the Thames, fortified against him by the Cowey Stakes, which some take rather for an ancient fishing weir ; and his point of crossing is variously maintained to have been at Brentford, Kingston, and Wallingford, while traces and traditions of Roman camps on either side the river help out the case for Halliford. *Non nostrum tantas*, etc. An authentic claim to note for Lower Halliford is as the home of Thomas Love Peacock, an author too little known to the general reader, though his humorous novels were spread out over nearly half a century, from the days when he caricatured Shelley and Coleridge, through the period of Brougham's patronage of useful knowledge, to that when competitive examinations gave him a fresh target for ridicule. By an audience fit, though few, he is not forgotten ; and for the sake of his wit he may be forgiven such thoughtless gibes as that "Scotchmen would be the best people in the world if there was nobody but themselves to give them characters." There is reason to believe, indeed, that even before his deathbed this audacious writer repented the profanity with which he bespattered our modern Athens. The plan, at least, of

Peacock's books was revived for our generation in Mr. Mallock's *New Republic;* but Peacock strikes a note of more farcical fun, and his satire seems seldom less jovial than the song put into the mouth of a character in *Crotchet Castle :*

> After careful meditation
> And profound deliberation
> On the various petty projects that have just been shown,
> Not a scheme in agitation
> For the world's amelioration
> Has a grain of common-sense in it, except my own!

Higher up on the bank comes the church core of Shepperton; then Shepperton Lock is higher still, opposite the Thames end of Weybridge. The village seems to have shifted its centre of gravity towards the station and Shepperton Green, which stand further back, but best known to strangers are the riverside inns and boathouses. To the right of a road cutting across to Laleham by Shepperton Green lies the small parish of Littleton, making perhaps the prettiest spot in this district, with its ancient Church and timbered park, which once enclosed a celebrated mansion destroyed by fire. This backwater of woodland, shading surely the tiniest of Britain's Exe or Esk streams, is pleasantly reached by a field-path from the end of Chertsey Bridge; then the road by Littleton goes on to less taking scenes about Feltham or Ashford.

At Shepperton Lock the tow-path crosses from the Surrey side, and henceforth one can walk along the

Middlesex bank, access to which has hitherto been precarious. Truth to tell, one thus gains little beyond a prospect of the stream flowing quietly between broad meadows, its bends making an idle round off the straight road, by which little more than a mile brings the cyclist from Shepperton to Chertsey Bridge. The green flats have a beauty of quiet amplitude, which is at least a change after Richmond's manifold prospects and the tangled groves of Hampton ; and here a fine background is formed by the pine-bristled heights of Surrey, edging the arena in which the Wey meets the Thames. William Black's rhapsodical pen can make no more of this scenery than "a peaceful landscape, very English-looking ; in the distance there was a low line of wooded hill, with here and there a church spire appearing among the trees." A thunderstorm would get a good stage here, as did Mr. Wells's Martian giants when they came stalking across from Byfleet.

Beyond Chertsey Bridge the tow-path is joined by a road that leads on along the wall of Lord Lucan's Park to Laleham Ferry, opposite the site of that once renowned Chertsey Abbey. The pretty village of Laleham, with its much-patched church, is notable as the home where Dr. Arnold took pupils in his early life. Matthew Arnold was born here, and is buried, beside other members of the family, in the churchyard to which his heart and his father's always turned fondly.

> Love lends life a little grace,
> A few sad smiles, and then
> Both are laid in one cold place.

The Rugby head master had to wrench himself away from Laleham, where, indeed, his special admiration was called forth on the Surrey side by the striking contrast of heath scenery mingling with rich valley lands. He could no longer rejoice in the bank up to Staines as a walk "which, though it be perfectly flat, has yet a great charm from its entire loneliness, there being not a house anywhere near it; and the river here has none of that stir of boats and barges upon it which makes it in many places as public as the high-road." Nowadays one must search far up the Thames for an unstirred reach.

Arnold's roomy house has vanished, and the quiet amenities of Laleham seem threatened by architecture of another school, though it stands a good two miles from either Shepperton or Staines station. But the builder is hardly needed to populate the river banks in summer, as we see after crossing the neck of Penton Hook, a most childish vagary of a mile or so in which hoary Father Thames thinks fit to indulge himself so far on in his career. This loop, on the Surrey side, is buckled by an extraordinary gathering of bungalows, house-boats, tents, and shanties that give airy and watery shelter to an encampment of respectable gipsies from London, a sort of amphibious picnic life come into favour in late years. Past this, the tow-path brings us round to the more permanent riverside quarters of Staines, reached, as usual, less deviously and pleasantly by a flat, straight road.

Staines is one of the oldest towns in Middlesex,

here or hereabouts appearing to have stood the Roman station *Ad Pontes*, by which the road to Silchester and Bath crossed the river. The whole vicinity has been found rich in Roman remains. The original town lies about its parish church in the valley of the Colne, that works its mills ; but the floods of this sluggish delta have washed a later growth to the east, and it shows a new red church on the Thames bank, where a terrace of dignity looks across to the boathouses lining the Surrey side. A meaner quarter straggles on to the dull flats of Staines Moor behind the railway, from which High Street curves spaciously down to the bridge, for long the nearest neighbour of London Bridge. In our great-grandfathers' day Staines Bridge was crossed by some three dozen coaches daily ; and who can count the myriad wheels that now make this short straight cut through Middlesex into Surrey !

Near its bridge stands what is taken for the town's godfather, London Stone, marking from times immemorial the limit of the City's jurisdiction up the Thames, as ascertained and asserted by repeated visits of the Lord Mayor and Corporation, which seem now to have fallen into abeyance. Here I would call up the spirit of Matthew Arnold to rebuke for me that young lion of the *Daily Telegraph* who, in criticizing my book on *Surrey*, growled at its mention of a notable Lord Mayor's progress nearly three generations ago as made to Staines, and not rather to Oxford. For once a critic is wrong : the goal of the official journey was Staines, the circumgression to Oxford being tacked on

as an after-thought, or piece of by-play. Even thus let me conclude this chapter with an excursus further up the river, to justify my accuracy by giving a faithful account of that Thames *Anabasis* that might have been forgotton but for the reverend Xenophon—his Lordship's chaplain, to wit—who enshrined the record in a leaden volume, now worth its weight in silver.

The civic fathers, we are told, having resolved to assert the City's prerogative at Staines, were tempted by an invitation to connect with that time-honoured ceremony a pleasure-trip to Oxford. To Oxford, then, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress travelled by land, and the first part of the chronicle is taken up in describing most minutely the circumstances of this extra jaunt. A whole page goes to the start, including a description of the coachman's countenance, "reserved and thoughtful" as became his important charge, and the "four high-spirited and stately horses" which, "having been allowed a previous day of unbroken rest, . . . chafed and champed exceedingly on the bits by which their impetuosity was restrained." But the murmurs of the admiring crowd were "at length hushed by the opening of the hall door"; then, "as soon as the female attendant of the Lady Mayoress had taken her seat, dressed with becoming neatness, at the side of the well-looking coachman, the carriage drove away—not, however, with that violent and extreme rapidity which rather astounds than gratifies the beholders, but at that steady and majestic pace which is always an indication of real greatness." The chaplain,

our author, was of the party, though he modestly keeps himself in a back seat. Thus he can assure us that the roads were "in excellent order, and that the whole face of creation gleamed with joy." It is not every day that creation sees an actual Lord Mayor faring forth over Middlesex roads.

At Hounslow a powder-mill happened to blow up, as if to salute the passage of the City potentate; but without further excitement he reached Oxford, joined there by several Aldermen and officials, who were forthwith entertained by the local municipality, while "it must here be mentioned that the Lady Mayoress and other ladies of the party, to the number of eight, ordered dinner at the 'Star,' and spent the evening in their own society." But let us pass over a long account of the illustrious strangers being fêted, lionized and addressed by Town and Gown, and come to that great day, Thursday, July 27, 1826, when the City Barge, having taken nearly a week to make the upward voyage, lay in waiting by the banks of Christ Church meadow, with its ten splendid scarlet silk banners waving gently in the rising sun, beside the shallop of the Thames Navigation Committee and another large boat, in which came his lordship's Yeomen of the Household, together with that most important functionary the cook, "who was at the time of embarkation busily engaged in preparing a fire in a grate fixed in the bow of the boat." So at last, "amidst shouts of reiterated applause from the surrounding multitudes, the City Barge, manned by the City watermen

in scarlet liveries, and all the other boats in attendance on his lordship, were simultaneously launched on the broad bosom of the princely Thames"—a sight not to be seen by this degenerate age unless on the front page of its *Illustrated London News*.

Punch was not such a rare show in the country as a live Lord Mayor. Crowds of people on the tow-path escorted the procession from Oxford ; then every town and village near the banks furnished a new contingent of eager spectators. "Distant shouts of acclamation perpetually re-echoed from field to field, as the various rustic parties, with their fresh and blooming faces, were seen hurrying forth from their cottages and gardens, climbing trees, struggling through copses, and traversing thickets to make their shortest way to the water side." No wonder the children ran, for the Lord Mayor and Mr. Alderman Atkins scattered handfuls of half-pence from their stately craft. At Caversham the condescension of true greatness was still more markedly exhibited in a moving incident recorded with long-drawn waggery, the gist of it being the picking out of a most uncouth and ludicrous-looking rustic mounted upon a "gaunt and rusty pony," whom, flinging him a piece of money, his Lordship overwhelmed with the honour of a commission to ride on to Reading as his *avant-courier*.

Having started from Oxford at seven, the convoy reached Reading when "the sun had whirled down his

broad disk into the west; and the evening twilight just served to show obscurely the tranquil stream of water over which the vessel glided, and the shapeless forms of country by which it was surrounded." Here the voyagers spent the night at the "Bear Inn," re-embarking next morning amid the ringing of bells and the firing of guns, not to speak of a band of music now taken on board. They dined at Clieveden, which prompts the author to a homily on the shortcomings of Dryden's Buckingham, balanced by a seven-page eulogium on the virtues of the late George III. The local gentry and officials did not fail to pay their respects to the passing Admiral of the Thames, and were invited on board "with all the usual forms of politeness." As we have seen, the distinguished tourists occasionally indulged themselves in mild jocosity; but on the whole their mood was one of becoming admiration, and their chaplain can assure us that "no recourse was had in any single instance throughout the voyage either to cards or dice, or to any other of those frivolous expedients to which the evening hours of life are sacrificed."

The next night was spent at Windsor, where some score of pages go to celebrate the Castle apartments in a true "God bless the Regent and the Duke of York!" spirit of British loyalty. Delayed till noon by sight-seeing, the procession then got afloat for Staines, and whereas, above Windsor, the state barge had almost stuck in the mud, it now made better way in

deeper water, and "left a long, undulating track behind" as it passed beneath that royal abode, "lifting up its lordly pile as if to receive the prostrate homage of the surrounding country."

Hitherto the voyage had been more of a pleasure jaunt, but at Staines came to be enacted the real business of this Lord Mayor's show *in partibus*. Duly arrayed in their robes and emblems of office, to the music of national airs, amid multitudes of the surrounding inhabitants, our City fathers descended to the shore, and three times solemnly circumambulated their western landmark—let us trust in true course of the sun, though on that pagan feature of the rite its reverend chronicler is not explicit.

When the procession halted, the Lord Mayor took his station near the City Boundary; and directed the City Sword to be placed on the Stone, in token of his Lordship's jurisdiction. It was also a part of the ceremony—which, though important, is simple—that the City Banner should wave over the Stone. At the request, therefore, of the Lord Mayor, Lord Henry Beauclerk, a lad of very prepossessing appearance, of the age of fourteen, dressed in naval uniform, and brother to His Grace the Duke of St. Albans, mounted the Stone, and held the City Banner during the performance of the ceremony. The Lord Mayor now received a bottle of wine from one of the attendants, and broke it, according to ancient custom, on the Stone. The Water-Bailiff then handed his Lordship a glass of wine, who drank, 'May God preserve the City of London!' In this he was joined by the young nobleman and the assembled company. Orders were then given that the following inscription should be engraven on the pedestal which supported the Stone:

KEW BRIDGE FROM BRENTFORD

IX

BEATING THE BOUNDS

LIKE that corporation party, both writer and reader might now go home, having reached the limit of their companionship. But one more ramble we may take, if not tired of each other. We have viewed Middlesex from its most familiar eminence, and we have radiated through it by its highroads from London. There remains to bind up our short wayfarings by perambulating the bounds of this little county, as some future Lord Mayor may be able to do from his state-balloon.

A barge will not serve us all the way here so well as a broomstick. On three sides Middlesex is enclosed by natural boundaries—the Thames on the south, the Lea on the east, and the Colne on the west. It is on the north side that the frontier becomes an arbitrary one, and, in fact, presents such a jagged outline as sometimes to suggest that whoever shore off this division of England must have been staggering from one tap of strong ale or mead to the next in any direction. A more creditable explanation refers such irregularity to spiritual rather than spirituous influences, the lands of

two bishops, we are told, having thus dovetailed into each other in the days when bishops had power to bind and loose on earth. Here it must be no trivial sport to beat the parish bounds—on the outside coincident with those of the county—as to which the oldest inhabitant could perhaps tell us how they were literally beaten into his memory in boyhood by blows or stripes administered at this or that spot, a custom that still may linger in playful survivals. What the oldest inhabitant will not know is that the rough custom of his youth seems to have been an attenuated form of bloodier sacrifices, which went more than skin deep in the propitiation of invisible spirits of term and boundary.

Something of the same irregularity, indeed, we find on beginning to trace the Middlesex bounds from Staines, above which they wander for a few miles as if confused among the delta of branches in which the Colne reaches the Thames. The main stream, to which Ordnance Survey maps grant the title, is that one crawling into Staines by the east side of the Great Northern Railway branch from Uxbridge. Here the boundary has bent a mile or two westwards, at one point touching the Colne Brook, as the branch is called that, from the village of this name, straggles down to the Thames opposite Egham. A pool in the Thames used to bear the nickname of "Colnbrook Churchyard," the point of the grim jest being that this frontier village had no churchyard, and that the robbers who infested the surrounding moors were in the way of flinging the bodies of their victims into the river.

'Moorish" is Spenser's epithet for the Colne, moor in this part of Britain having commonly implied marshy rather than heathy ground; and behind Staines we get on an unlovely river flat still bearing the name of Staines Moor. But if we incline to hurry away from the Colne as sluggish and defiled by industries, let us remember how dear its waters were to Milton, whose home in youth was at Horton on the Bucks side, whence he had choice of wanderings among

> "Meadows trim with daisies pied,
> Shallow brooks and river wide."

From Colnbrook the boundary bends back towards the Colne River, with which it presently falls in along the reach from Yiewsley to Uxbridge, where this stream skirmishes out on the western flank of the canal's straighter march. On the Middlesex side, here, the world is too much with us, and we must not be tempted over to the woods and heaths of Iver, in Bucks. So let us hasten up the canal bank to Uxbridge, where the border takes a crook to the east along a stream known as the Shire Ditch, then, recrossing the canal, once more follows the river as far as the county's north-western corner.

This upper half of the western boundary is more picturesque than the flats below. Now the Colne runs through a real valley, shut in to the east by a ridge of high ground, looking over to the Bucks village of Denham, and other spots known to artists as well as to anglers. The ridge itself, which a road mounts by the

shrunken bounds of Uxbridge Common, has several points both of beauty and interest. Over it for nearly half a dozen miles extends the name of Harefield, associated with that of the Newdigate family, which has such a good chance of fame through their annual *vates sacer* at Oxford. One of them chose an "Adam Bede" for land agent, whose daughter would widely renown, under an *alias*, their Warwickshire seat, at which George Eliot had glimpses of squirely life. Another of the Newdigates was well known to our grandfathers as a Parliamentary Protestant champion. Their modern mansion, Harefield Place, comes a couple of miles above Uxbridge, built here to replace the old house, two or three miles further on, that had been destroyed by fire. This was the seat of the Countess of Derby for whom Milton wrote his Arcades, and whose tomb is the most sumptuous of those ornamenting Harefield Church.

On the wooded bank behind the church the site of that defunct home is picturesquely marked by a group of ponds and grand old trees. By what seems to have been once an avenue, a path slopes on up the bank to Breakspear, a still flourishing mansion, beautifully embowered, notable because this manor is said to have belonged to the family of the one English Pope, Adrian IV. Some few years ago, when a Catholic chapel was being consecrated in the neighbourhood, the mason brought duly to wall up the relics in its altar turned out to bear the name of Nicholas Breakspear. At a social function which followed there was naturally some talk of such a coincidence, and an inconsiderate

Catholic suggested that the man must be a descendant of his great namesake. "Don't be taking away a Pope's character!" cried one jovial Irish priest; to which another made response: "Faith! and it's no character he had to lose after selling us to the English." This Pope, who gave Henry II. a title to Ireland in consideration of the payment of Peter's pence, has been also claimed as a Hertford man; but if Breakspear were his cradle, it stands a good mile within the Middlesex border, about as far to the west of Ruislip reservoir.

Harefield Church, with its show of monuments, lies below its village, beyond which, on the road to Rickmansworth, we come to Harefield Park and Harefield Grove, or, descending into the river valley, we should find a Harefield Moor and a Harefield Wharf on the canal. Harefield is as yet a real country village with quiet inns and roomy green, but ominous placards hold out a threat of "villa residences." Nothing, indeed, could at present be more unsuburban than the byroad which, at the school-house, turns off along Harefield Park and by the hamlet of Hillend, to wind shadily with westward bends till it drops steeply to the canal, where a huge quarry has uncovered a chalk bank contrasting with variegated disclosures. For at this corner, as at one other, Middlesex shows its age in gouty knuckles of chalk as well as wrinkles of sand.

To reach the extreme north-western nook of the county we must now leave the ridge, to hold for a mile across the flat on which, alongside that cart-horse canal,

the Colne goes frisking and sliding in wayward channels, by whose clear shallows the Miltons of to-day must beware how they come angling after poetic images, as these are preserves for the "True Waltonians" of Rickmansworth. At the ford on the further branch, near the village of Mill End, we reach the border-line, which has been kept in view west of the parallel ridge; but now it turns eastward, making a dip to the south as it crosses the river flat, then soon mounting to green bastions moated by the canal.

On this northern side it is that we may find it hard to know at any point whether we are in Middlesex or in Herts. The line runs over high ground a couple of miles south of Rickmansworth, passing between Harefield Grove and Bishop's Wood, then turning north along the road to Batchworth Heath, that brings us past a large new consumptive hospital, testimony to the airiness of this plateau, more than 300 feet above the sea. The woods on either hand, with their sand-banks and pine-clumps, are jealously fortified by wire and placards; but part of the heath is still open, where we come to the gates of Moor Park, looking over such a fine view southward and eastward. The border-line here passes through the garden of the "Prince of Wales," crosses the highroad mounting up from Northwood, then for a little is roughly represented by the byroad which drops from the Moor Park gates, making towards a height crowned by the Oxhey Woods; but soon it bends back from this road, and to touch it again we must take a path along the Metropolitan line,

beside which we should find it marked by a funereal obelisk, that seems a monument to the rural charms of Northwood, here bleeding to death in red-brick villas. A more prosaic explanation of such landmarks is as showing the limits of the Port of London coal-tax, abolished in our time ; but, like the Father of History, I repeat this as told me, not as matter of faith.

From Northwood the border runs on to the bottom of the Oxhey woods, thence trending northwards across the London and North Western line a mile beyond Pinner Station, and keeping a little to the west of Grim's Dyke, as it mounts on to Harrow Weald Common, and from that to the highest point of Middlesex at the edge of Bushey Heath. Its course now is on the north-west side of Stanmore Common, to touch the Aldenham reservoir, whence it ascends to Elstree, over a sweep of high ground giving fine glimpses on either side, though I cannot make out from what point, hereabouts, Defoe could have had the extensive prospect which set his foreign companions exclaiming that England was all a garden.

They had there on the right Hand, the Town of St. *Albans* in their View ; and all the Spaces between, and further beyond it, look'd indeed like a Garden. The enclos'd Corn-Fields made one grand Parterre, the thick planted Hedge Rows, like a Wilderness or Labyrinth, divided in *Espaliers*, the Villages interspers'd, look'd like so many several Noble Seats of Gentlemen at a Distance. In a Word it was all Nature, and yet look'd all like Art ; on the left Hand we see the West-End of *London*, *Westminster-Abbey* and the *Parliament-House*, but the Body of the City was cut off by the Hill, at which *Hampstead* intercepted the Sight on that side. More to

the South we had *Hampton Court* and S.W. *Windsor*, and between both, all those most Beautiful Parts of *Middlesex* and *Surrey*, on the Bank of the Thames, of which I have already said so much.

From Elstree the border-line closely follows the road to Barnet as far as the hamlet of Barnet Gate, where it turns south-east for its most extraordinary vagaries. Holding straight on by the road north-eastward, in little more than a mile we should strike it again across the mouth of that inlet, miles deep, by which Herts flows into Middlesex about the Great North Road. A little below Barnet Gate the line bends southward towards Highwood, then again eastward in the dip between Totteridge and Mill Hill, so as to bring the former ridge into Herts. On the road mounting it, the boundary is marked by a half-buried post, economically abbreviating our county's style as D.D.X. I stray only some few hundred yards from my diocese in pointing out the beautiful walk along this ridge—a long mile of broad-swarded road, or stretched-out common, bordered by ponds, farms, cottage gardens and trees, through which one gets fine glimpses of Barnet to the north and Mill Hill to the south. Then comes the village and its Church, opposite which Copped Hall was at one time occupied by Bulwer Lytton ; Cardinal Manning, Richard Baxter, and Lady Rachael Russell being other names connected with this pretty place, only a little blighted as yet by the suburban builder. Further on, at the "Orange Tree," opens the cottage-bordered green, an unusually long one, from the foot of which run most rustic paths

that would soon bring us back into Middlesex, as does Totteridge Lane, holding eastward across the Barnet line to Whetstone.

For here the eccentric boundary, after attaining its "furthest south" near Woodside Park station, has taken another bend north beside the Dollis Brook, so as to stretch out a tongue of Middlesex for some two miles along the Great North Road, across which it strikes, then again turns south by the Great Northern Railway, till it ends its maddest deviation in this direction near Colney Hatch Asylum, only about eight miles from the Thames. Crossing the railway beyond New Southgate station, and walking on eastwards to the next cross roads, one reaches the invisible head of this crook in a field still open to the north. The boundary stones having disappeared, the exact run of the line, by a few feet, is at present in question, a dispute of some consequence upon ground now "ripe" for the builder, since building regulations differ in the two counties.

Now, as if scared from the thickening suburbs, it turns back north to enclose Southgate and Winchmore Hill in Middlesex, leaving the Barnets in Herts with the valley of the Pymmes Brook, here tripping like a younker and a prodigal, yet after a few miles more to creep so lamely into the Lea over Tottenham Marshes. At Cock Fosters the wilful line takes a westward course along Hadley Common, at the further end of which it wanders round the outskirts of High Barnet, so as to fall in again with the road from Elstree;

but soon it starts off on a fresh northward tack along the county's north-eastern headland. It would now seem to be tired of freakish tricks, and in the woods below North Mimms it bends eastward to run pretty steadily on between Potter's Bar and Northaw, beside the first stage of the road to Enfield, then a little to the north of White Webbs Park, by the south side of Theobald's Park, across the New River and the high-road entering Waltham Cross, a mile beyond which it is brought up with a round turn by the Lea.

The sluggish crooks of the Lea make the county's eastern boundary. But alas for that once idyllic river, loved and lost by gentle piscators! Amateurs of Dutch scenery might here and there find a bit to their taste; and the Essex bank has heights that show to more advantage over Middlesex flats, where one sees how this lower course of the Lea has been fouled into a dull Lethe, suggesting few poetical images, unless those of Browning's "Childe Roland to the dark tower came." Its meadows, on which nowadays one will hardly find a "milkmaid singing like a nightingale," or "young Corydon, the shepherd, playing purely on his oaten pipe," are more fitly described as marshes; and the wandering and branching stream is drained into the Lea Navigation, in part coinciding with the river's course, but more often holding aloof from it like a prosperous and prosaic citizen from some ne'er-do-well idler of the family.

Not that it is altogether idle, indeed, for as it creeps and twists to its slimy mouth behind the

forlorn Isle of Dogs, "the wanton Lea" has been pressed into the service of London's water-supply, stored and well filtered, let us hope. Reservoir embankments ill adorn the river scenery ; nor does a new pea-green swimming-bath excite such curiosity as did a towering pile of faggots or brushwood, once used as rifle-butts, that made a landmark of Tottenham Marshes till the other day it lit them up in its moment of glory as a gigantic bonfire. The cheerfullest sight here is the football scrimmages of would-be Hotspurs, played on gateless flats. The creeks and channels of the river-bed are still frequented by local Izaak Waltons, in whose breasts springs eternal hope of roach or dace. Very hot weather tempts venturesome youth to bathe in the Stygian stream. The sophisticated main channel is ploughed by crews of athletic East Enders who have little need to be admonished, "Eyes in the boat!" This river was once capable of more serious navigation, if we may trust the legend that a fleet of Danes sailed up it for twenty miles, settling themselves in a camp from which Alfred diverted the stream, and set on the bold Londoners to make havoc of that stranded fleet, so that, in Drayton's verse, "old Lea brags of the Danish blood."

We are here skirting close to the high-road by which we came out through Edmonton. "But I now see Tottenham Cross, and our short walk hither shall put a period to my too long discourse." It is as well we are not bound to enter the County of London, since there the Lea would bring us to Hackney Marsh,

perhaps the most unlovely spot of Middlesex soil—one which some examiners, indeed, might propose to bracket with Staines Moor, that at least deserves a *proxime accessit*.

Such blotches, however, are exceptional, and between those dismal flats on the most distant edges of the county so recklessly libelled as "all ugly," it has been shown how one can find much pleasant and not a little charming scenery of a truly English type. If a jury of my fellow-countymen and gentle readers be not now ready to give a verdict of slander against Cobbett, let them go forth to examine with their own eyes the evidence on which I have been able faithfully to discharge my duty as advocate for Middlesex.

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new!"

THE END

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